

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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March 18, 2026

Start: 9:37 a.m.

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Oswald J. Feliz  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Speaker Julie Menin  
Public Advocate Williams  
Shaun Abreu  
Joann Ariola  
Chris Banks  
Gale A. Brewer  
Tiffany Cabán  
David Carr  
Elsie Encarnación  
Simcha Felder  
Jennifer Gutiérrez  
Ty Hankerson  
Kamillah Hanks  
Linda Lee  
Sandy Nurse  
Justin E. Sanchez  
Lynn Schulman  
Phil Wong

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jessica Tisch  
NYPD Commissioner

Mike LiPetri  
NYPD Chief of Department

Tania Kinsella  
NYPD First Deputy Commissioner

Kristine Ryan  
NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Management and Budget

Michael Gerber  
NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Legal Affairs

Alex Crohn  
NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives

Andrew Arias  
NYPD First Chief at Detective Bureau

Darcel Clark  
Bronx District Attorney

Eric Gonzalez  
Brooklyn District Attorney

Melinda Katz  
Queens District Attorney

Michael McMahon  
Staten Island District Attorney

Alvin Bragg  
Manhattan District Attorney

Bridget Brennan  
Special Narcotics Prosecutor

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jonathan Darche  
Civilian Complaint Review Board Executive  
Director

Deanna Logan  
Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice Director

Nora Daniel  
MOCJ Chief of Staff

Candice Julien  
MOCJ Chief Operations Officer

Roberto Fiato  
MOCJ Chief Financial Officer

Stan German  
New York County Defenders

Tina Luongo  
Legal Aid Society

Juval Scott  
Bronx Defenders

Lisa Schreibersdorf  
Brooklyn Defenders

Piyali Basak  
Neighborhood Defender Services Harlem

Jane Fox  
UAW 2325

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Donald Nesbit  
DC 37

Tabitha Sheppard  
DC 37

Olivia Duong  
DC 37

Reverend Wendy Calderone-Payne  
Urban Youth Alliance

Megan French-Marcelin  
New York ATI Coalition

Nadia Chait  
CASES

Lily Shapiro  
ATI Reentry Coalition, Fortune Society

Madeline Hopper  
Women's Prison Association

Isabel Greenberg  
Center for Employment Opportunities

Asa Meta [sp?]  
Common Justice

C. Glover

Edwin Santana  
Freedom Agenda

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Erica Ford

Hailey Nolasco  
Center for Justice Innovation

Messiah Ramkissooon  
Youth Justice Network

Evangeline Byars  
People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft

Yvonne Williams  
People's Coalition to Stop Deed Theft

Omar Hardy

Ruth Lowenkron  
NYLPI

Tawanna Gilford  
Reimagining Police Coalition

Melody Jimenez  
No Voice Unheard

1  
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Sound check for the Committee  
3 on Public Safety. Today's date is March 18, 2026  
4 being recorded by Danny Huang in Council Chambers.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to  
6 today's New York City Council hearing on the  
7 Committee on Public Safety. At this time, please  
8 silence all electronic devices and no one may  
9 approach today's - no one may approach the dais.  
10 Chair, you may begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [GAVEL] Thank you. Good  
12 morning everyone. I am Council Member Oswald Feliz,  
13 Chair of the Committee on Public Safety. Welcome to  
14 the Preliminary Budget hearing for fiscal year 2027.  
15 These hearings, as we know, can go on for 10 hours,  
16 if not more, so make sure to have your coffee ready,  
17 everybody. It'll be a long period that I look very  
18 forward to. Before I provide my opening statement,  
19 I'll pass it on to our very own Speaker Julie Menin  
20 for her opening statement.

21 SPEAKER MENIN: Thank you so much, Chair, and  
good morning, Commissioner. We're delighted to see  
you and we appreciate you and your whole leadership  
team being here today, and I want to thank Chair  
Feliz for his leadership in this very important

1  
2 hearing. We're here today to discuss the NYPD's  
3 proposed \$6.7 billion Preliminary Budget for fiscal  
4 year 2027 which supports 48,874 in personnel. Beyond  
5 getting a clearer picture of what resources are  
6 needed and available for the Department's day-to-day  
7 operating needs, we'd like to hear about some of the  
8 Administration's recent budget changes to the  
9 Department.

10 In this preliminary plan, the Administration  
11 removed funding that would have added 5,000 uniformed  
12 officers to the NYPD's headcount over the next four  
13 years. And although the Department budget and  
14 headcount have remained stable, the Council wants to  
15 understand how you'll balance your existing resources  
16 with the NYPD's responsibilities of keeping New  
17 Yorkers safe.

18 As it stands, the Department's headcount of  
19 roughly 35,000 officers is far fewer than its  
20 headcount was on September 11th, 2001, yet the City  
21 has grown considerably over the past 25 years.

Another issue we're interested in learning about  
more is about how the Department is working to  
protect New Yorkers from religious and hate-motivated  
incidents at a time of increased hate crimes and

1  
2 recent threats to houses of worship. The NYPD plays  
3 a vital role in responding to hate crimes and  
4 protecting every community across our city. We'd  
5 also like to get a better understanding of a recent  
6 change in how the Department keeps track of incidents  
7 of hate. As we know, the Department's ability to  
8 respond proactively to the city's needs instead of  
9 reactively is determined in large part by its budget.  
10 That is why myself, Chair Feliz and our colleagues on  
11 the Public Safety Committee have a range of issues  
12 and questions that we would like to get clarity on  
13 today. Again, thank you for being here and for your  
14 commitment to our city and to its safety. I now want  
15 to pass it back to Chair Feliz.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you, Speaker Menin.  
17 Thank you so much for your opening statement. Today,  
18 we'll discuss the different budgetary priorities for  
19 the Police Department, our District Attorneys, the  
20 Special Narcotics Prosecutor, the Civilian Complaint  
21 Review Board, and the Mayor's Office for Criminal  
Justice to understand how the Administration's  
proposal for four agencies that play a key role on  
the issue of safety are achieving that mission.

1  
2 We'll also hear from public defenders, and of  
3 course, as well as the public. I would like to  
4 welcome the leadership of these agencies who play a  
5 crucial role in keeping our communities safe. The  
6 Fiscal 2027 Preliminary Budget plan includes \$8.3  
7 billion supporting 54,644 positions across all  
8 agencies. There are many important budget actions in  
9 this plan, and through your testimony we hope to  
10 better understand them and the impact it'll have on  
11 the issue of public safety.

12 As we consider these things, we'll also be  
13 looking at existing initiatives and evaluating their  
14 contributions to the progress that we have made.  
15 Now, a few points on the agencies that will be  
16 testifying today. First, in our very own NYPD, we're  
17 thankful for the work and sacrifices that police  
18 officers make for the city every single day to keep  
19 New Yorkers safe. Public safety is a shared  
20 responsibility. We achieve it with good schools,  
21 good jobs and opportunities in our communities.  
Police officers play an important role on this issue.  
They help ensure that residents can engage in these  
activities, school, work, opportunity without having  
to worry about their safety, and we're thankful for

1 the sacrifices that they make every single day.  
2 Their dedication and commitment to the city does not  
3 go unnoticed, including when they risk their lives to  
4 remove guns from our streets, including in the  
5 communities that I represent in the Bronx, or as we  
6 saw three weeks ago when police officers ran towards  
7 an ignited device that was thrown to harm others at a  
8 peaceful protest. They risked their own lives  
9 without hesitation to keep others safe, and we are  
10 thankful for that.

11 Now, on today, I look forward to hearing and  
12 learning about many topics, including NYPD's  
13 headcount, recruitment and retention strategies,  
14 overtime spending habits, savings initiatives,  
15 response time, capital projects, and more including  
16 many policy issues that I'll be asking about.  
17 Based on the data that I've reviewed, it seems like  
18 we made some progress on some of these topics,  
19 including overtime, progress that we look forward to  
20 hearing about, but progress that we look forward to  
21 working to take even further.

22 Additionally, we made progress on the issue of  
23 crime. 2025 was the safest year on many issues,  
24 including on the issue of gun violence, with the

1  
2 lowest shootings in recorded history. We made  
3 progress, but that progress is not reaching every  
4 community and we want to learn why. It's especially  
5 not reaching our most-vulnerable communities. For  
6 example, this year, New York City has seen  
7 approximately 42 murders, and almost half of those  
8 murders have been in the Bronx, specifically 42  
9 citywide and 19 of those have been in the Bronx. The  
10 same is true for shootings. New York City has seen  
11 approximately 113 shootings and approximately half of  
12 those, or specifically 48, have also been in the  
13 Bronx.

14 We look forward to discussing this and learning  
15 about steps that we're taking to ensure that the  
16 safety-related progress that we're making reaches  
17 every community. We also look forward to discussing  
18 additional areas that seem to need attention,  
19 including the hiring and retaining of school safety  
20 agents and 911 operators.

21 Now, on CCRB, MOCJ, District Attorneys, and the  
Narcotics Prosecutor who will testify today, I'm  
eager to hear how the CCRB has carried out its  
mission with a restricted budget and the budget  
request submitted by the Board. Additionally, I'm

1  
2 excited to learn about the priorities of our DAs and  
3 the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, while addressing  
4 office disparities, alternative to incarceration  
5 policies, discovery funding, and the decisions that  
6 are vital to lowering the incarcerated population.  
7 And finally, I look forward to discussing how MOCJ is  
8 supporting alternatives to incarceration and reentry  
9 services at every level of the criminal justice  
10 system and their efforts to increase public safety  
11 and achieve this city's required goal of closing  
12 Rikers Island.

13  
14 There are many important budget actions in this  
15 plan, and we look forward and hope to better  
16 understand them and the impact that they have on  
17 public safety. I look forward to productive  
18 conversations today and the days ahead. I also want  
19 to thank our Public Safety Committee staff for their  
20 hard work, our Financial Analysts, Owen Kotowski and  
21 Casey Lajszky, our Policy Analyst Chad Benjamin,  
Committee Counsels Jeremy Whiteman and Josh  
Kingsley, and I also want to thank my own staff, my  
Chief of Staff, Esperanza Diaz [sp?], and my  
Legislative Director for all the work that they put  
in preparing this hearing. I also want to thank  
members from your

1  
2 team, Commissioner, including your Chief Ryan Morola  
3 [sp?] and your Community Affairs Deputy Commissioner  
4 [inaudible] who have been extremely helpful as far as  
5 everybody else, all others who have been very helpful  
6 with ensuring that we're being as productive as  
7 possible on all the issues that we work on together.

8 I'd also like to recognize Council Members who  
9 have joined today, Council Members Hanks, Carr,  
10 Schulman, Encarnación, and Felder, and Council Member  
11 Wong as well. And with that said, I would like to  
12 welcome Commissioner Tisch and her team who we'll  
13 hear from first. I'll now pass it back to the  
14 Committee Counsel for a few procedural items. And  
15 we'll be hearing from Police Commissioner Jessica  
16 Tisch, Kristine Ryan, Michael Gerber, Alex Crohn,  
17 Tania Kinsella, and Michael LiPetri.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Can you all just raise your  
19 right hand and just repeat after me? I affirm to  
20 tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the  
21 truth and to answer honestly to Council Member  
questions? Affirm that you do. You may go ahead  
and say your testimony. Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Good morning, Speaker Menin,  
Chair Feliz, and members of the City Council

1 Committee on Public Safety. I am Jessica Tisch,  
2 Commissioner of the New York City Police Department.

3 I am joined at the table today by our Chief of  
4 Department Mike LiPetri, our First Deputy  
5 Commissioner Tania Kinsella, our Deputy Commissioner  
6 of Management and Budget, Kristine Ryan, our Deputy  
7 Commissioner of Legal Matters Michael Gerber, and  
8 Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Alex  
9 Crohn. I am also joined here today by the full  
10 Executive Staff of the New York City Police

11 Department so that we may answer your questions as  
12 transparently and as comprehensively as possible.

13 Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning  
14 on the NYPD's Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget and  
15 to share with you the remarkable work of the men and  
16 women of the New York City Police Department.

17 Throughout my 18 years in government, I have always  
18 enjoyed a strong and collaborative working  
19 relationship with the Council and I expect that to  
20 continue.

21 At our last budget hearings I laid out my vision  
for this department. I spoke about the immediate  
need to restore the public's trust through strong  
ethical leadership. I announced sweeping changes to

1 the NYPD's organizational structure. I presented  
2 plans for new operational units and department-wide  
3 initiatives created to meet the demands of modern  
4 policing and respond to the needs of real New  
5 Yorkers, and I detailed the dynamic data-driven  
6 strategy to fight crime and to reduce violence in our  
7 neighborhoods and on our subways.

8 In 2025, that strategy and the cops who executed  
9 it so brilliantly made public safety history and we  
10 did not just break records, we shattered them. Last  
11 year, New York City had the fewest shooting incidents  
12 ever recorded with 66 fewer shootings than the  
13 previous low set in 2018. With just 35 shootings  
14 citywide in December, we set a record for the fewest  
15 shootings in a single month ever.

16 The number of people shot in New York City also  
17 fell to a historic low last year, beating the record  
18 set in 2018 by more than 40 victims. Every city  
19 borough, including the Bronx, saw double digit  
20 percent reductions in gun violence in 2025, and this  
21 success is carried over into 2026. For the first two  
months this year, the NYPD has delivered the fewest  
shooting incidents, shooting victims, and murders  
over that time period in recorded history.

1  
2 These historic reductions drove an overall  
3 decline of nearly six percent in major crime across  
4 the city for the first two months of this year with  
5 decreases in every borough led by the Bronx, which is  
6 an 11 percent crime decrease this year so far.

7 Included in that overall crime decline was a 20  
8 percent reduction in citywide burglaries. Retail  
9 theft fell 14 percent citywide last year with more  
10 than half of all shoplifting complaints resulting in  
11 an arrest, the highest rate since 2019, and retail  
12 theft has continued its steep decline in 2026,  
13 falling by more than 20 percent year-to-date.

14 This progress extended into our transit system in  
15 2025 which is the safest year on our subways since  
16 2009, excluding the pandemic years. And I am pleased  
17 to report that right now in calendar year 2026 we are  
18 on pace with those record 2025 numbers. And 2026 has  
19 been the safest start to any year on record in our  
20 public housing developments with shooting incidents,  
21 shooting victims, murders and robberies falling to  
all-time lows.

Much of this is the result of a crime-fighting  
plant that I detailed at this hearing last year. Our  
Violence Reduction Zones, this idea is simple. Don't

1 just get tough on crime, get smart. Find out where  
2 and when our cops are needed most, and put them  
3 there. It is precision policing in the modern age  
4 using powerful analytics to develop a focused and a  
5 data-driven strategy that our cops can execute. The  
6 resulting plan encompasses everything from highly  
7 visible foot posts, to undercover gang takedowns. We  
8 are seeing the biggest impacts in our city's most  
9 violent neighborhoods, including those in the Bronx.  
10 This is what happens when we are guided by the  
11 principles of precision policing, and last fall, we  
12 brought that same exacting approach to our schools.  
13 As of March 1st, compared to the 2024/2025 school  
14 year, major crime in our city schools has fallen by  
15 more than nine percent, and total crime complaints  
16 are down more than 15 percent.

15 At the same time, enforcement in our schools is  
16 also down with arrests declining nearly 10 percent as  
17 of March 1st. This is the result of two things. One,  
18 we posted officers in school zones, deploying them  
19 along our students' commuting corridors including  
20 subway stations and bus routes with a special focus  
21 on dismissal times.

1  
2 Two, we overhauled the executive leadership of  
3 the School Safety Division as well as its reporting  
4 structure, placing it directly under our great First  
5 Deputy Commissioner, and part of that reorganization  
6 was taking school safety agents out of administrative  
7 roles and putting them directly into the schools  
8 where they are interacting and building relationships  
9 with students.

10 This is the same playbook we are using against  
11 street level crime, a precise, proactive plan with  
12 strong central leadership and more officers on post,  
13 and I am pleased to say that it is working. Now, our  
14 public safety mission includes our relentless battle  
15 against hate in every form and bias-motivated crime  
16 remains top priority. We understand the fear and we  
17 see the pattern.

18 Since October 7th, 2023, hate has ricocheted  
19 across the globe, especially targeting the Jewish  
20 community. Before 10-07, antisemitic hate crimes  
21 were down 20 percent in New York City, but by the end  
of 2023, they had surged 80 percent. And while Jewish  
New Yorkers make up 10 percent of our city's  
population, they account for more than half of all  
hate crime victims.

1  
2 The NYPD is laser-focused on preventing these  
3 crimes, surging resources, investigating every  
4 complaint, and calibrating our presence to meet the  
5 threat no matter where it lurks. And last year, we  
6 reversed the upward trend we saw after Hamas' attack  
7 on Israel in late 2023.

8 In 2025, hate crime incidents were down nearly 16  
9 percent overall from the year prior with anti-Jewish  
10 crimes down more than seven percent. Other  
11 categories that saw significant declines were  
12 anti-Muslim hate crimes, down 31 percent, and  
13 anti-LGBT down more than 40 percent. So far this  
14 year, though, the hate crime statistics are  
15 troubling. We are seeing a rise in antisemitic crime  
16 and in hate crimes overall citywide. We certainly  
17 will not hide from this. In fact, it only  
18 strengthens our resolve to combat any and all forms  
19 of bias, prejudice and hate.

20 I applaud all of those who have come forward to  
21 report these intolerable acts, and our Hate Crime  
Taskforce which is the premier unit of its kind in  
the nation. Thoroughly investigates every single  
complaint. This is not a time for fear. It is a  
time to face these threats head-on. Now, reducing

1  
2 crime which will always be our main mission was just  
3 one of the pledges that we made and delivered in  
4 2025. We also said we were going to restore  
5 credibility and lead with integrity. As you know, we  
6 inherited a department plagued by scandal and a  
7 public confidence that was deeply shaken. We wasted  
8 no time fixing it.

9 A department-wide review led to an overhaul of  
10 our executive leadership, matching the right skills  
11 and experience with the right roles. We restructured  
12 the Internal Affairs Bureau, both in leadership and  
13 in personnel. We returned more than a thousand cops  
14 from administrative roles back to patrol. We reduced  
15 waste and redundancy in our vehicle fleet, and we  
16 worked to rebuild trust not only between the police  
17 and the public, but also between the cops and NYPD  
18 leadership.

19 On January 1st of last year, we implemented our  
20 overtime management plan designed to prevent misuse  
21 to ensure compliance with NYPD regulations and ensure  
more effective and efficient use of overtime. As a  
result, in 2025, the department reduced overtime  
spending by \$144 million compared to 2024, a decrease  
of 12.4 percent. I spoke last year about our efforts

1  
2 to work collaboratively and fairly with the CCRB, and  
3 in particular my decision to change our policies so  
4 that CCRB substantiations are processed and  
5 adjudicated on the merits, rather than being  
6 dismissed on technical grounds. These changes have  
7 had a dramatic impact on the NYPD CCRB concurrence  
8 rate.

9 According to the CCRB's own data, in 2023, the  
10 NYPD agreed with the CCRB's disciplinary  
11 recommendations in 56 percent of cases. In 2024, it  
12 fell to 30 percent of cases. But in 2025, after the  
13 changes were implemented, the concurrence rate rose  
14 to 83 percent, and if you exclude the short statute  
15 of limitations dismissals from the beginning of 2025,  
16 a policy that I reversed on March 1st of last year,  
17 that concurrence rate in 2025 was approximately 90  
18 percent.

19 That is in 90 percent of cases, I adopted the  
20 discipline recommended by the CCRB. As outlined in  
21 this chamber last year, we also amended the NYPD's  
vehicle pursuit policy to give our officers smarter  
and safer protocols. Now, pursuits are limited to  
the most serious and dangerous crimes, and the impact

1  
2 was immediate with vehicle pursuits dropping by  
3 nearly 65 percent last year compared to 2024.

4 Just as important, the risks associated with  
5 pursuits declined sharply. Fatalities fell by more  
6 than 80 percent. Collisions dropped by 50 percent  
7 and injuries were cut almost in half. New  
8 leadership, new policies, and renewed focus on what  
9 matters most, the work, stabilized this department.  
10 It restored the credibility of this organization, the  
11 integrity of this profession, and the dignity of  
12 policing in New York City.

13 Once that standard was reset, we could turn to  
14 reshaping, restructuring and modernizing the NYPD in  
15 ways that will best serve New Yorkers today and for  
16 years to come, and again, that work would be driven  
17 by the data and based on the needs of the people that  
18 we serve.

19 Since 2020, domestic violence incidents in New  
20 York City have increased by 38 percent and accounted  
21 for 40 percent of our overall felony assaults  
citywide. This is a serious issue and it demanded a  
survivor-centered, trauma-informed approach. So, in  
2025 we created the new Domestic Violence Unit within  
the Detective Bureau with approximately 450 domestic

1  
2 violence investigators who are fully dedicated to  
3 prevention, to investigation, and to follow up on DV  
4 cases.

5       2025 also saw the creation of the NYPD's Quality  
6 of Life Division, which is now operational in every  
7 precinct and housing command across the entire city.  
8 Since 2019, 311 calls in New York City have more than  
9 doubled. Demand for these services is at an all-time  
10 high and with our citywide Q Teams, the NYPD is  
11 finally equipped to handle that demand. And let me  
12 be clear, Quality of Life Division officers are  
13 responding to 311, the daily issues eroding people's  
14 sense of safety and answering the pleas New Yorkers  
15 have been making for years. This is not a return to  
16 Broken Windows Policing. It is not zero tolerance  
17 enforcement. It is not about preventing more serious  
18 crime. This is a different policy for one purpose  
19 alone, and that is improving everyone's quality of  
20 life.

21       2025 was the year of firsts, renewed focus and a  
new way forward, and that moment continues in 2026  
with plans for enhanced training, facility  
improvements, better safety equipment, upgraded use  
of force alternatives and more. And underpinning all

1  
2 of it, was one constant over this department's  
3 181-year history and that is our cops. They are the  
4 most important resource that we have, and in 2025, we  
5 set about restoring and stabilizing their ranks. The  
6 pundits and the critics said it was impossible. They  
7 wrote policy papers and op-eds about the  
8 unprecedented exodus of NYPD officers, and they  
9 preached about a profession in unrecoverable decline,  
10 but we knew better.

11 In 2025, NYPD retirements were exactly what we  
12 projected they would be based on the number of people  
13 hired two decades ago, and resignations before  
14 pension eligibility were 40 percent what they were  
15 three years ago. Put that together with the largest  
16 hiring year on record, more than 4,000 officers hired  
17 across four academy classes, and we not only outpaced  
18 attrition in 2025, we essentially brought the NYPD  
19 back to its authorized uniformed headcount for the  
20 first time in three years. And at the end of 2025,  
21 we had about 800 more officers than we did on average  
over the last three years. And let me be very clear  
about this, at no point between 2021 and 2025 did the  
NYPD have a stable headcount above 35,000.

1  
2 The narrative that we cut 5,000 cops is frankly  
3 absurd, because they never existed. Would we love to  
4 have more officers serving the millions of New  
5 Yorkers who depend on us each day? Of course we  
6 would, but in a realistic world of limited resources,  
7 I can say that our current headcount is more stable  
8 and more consistent than it has been since before the  
9 pandemic.

10 Now, if we want to keep building a strong  
11 department, we have to look honestly at where our  
12 hiring processes need to change, from our recruitment  
13 strategy to our psychological and our physical  
14 evaluations to our background investigation  
15 protocols, to our disqualification criteria. Every  
16 part of the process must be reviewed through the  
17 lenses of fairness and transparency.

18 To do this, I am convening a panel on applicant  
19 hiring made up of internal and external experts from  
20 law enforcement, academia, and the community and take  
21 a close look at the hiring process and recommend  
changes. The goal is straightforward, remove  
unnecessary barriers, bring greater transparency to  
decision, and make sure qualified candidates are not  
being pushed away by the system itself. On the panel

1  
2 will be NYPD Chief of Patrol Phil Rivera, NYPD  
3 Commanding Officer of the Community Affairs Bureau  
4 Assistant Chief Victoria Perry, New York City Council  
5 Member and former Public Safety Chair Yusef Salaam,  
6 Danielle Outlaw, the former Commissioner of the  
7 Philadelphia Police Department and former Chief of  
8 Police of the Portland Police Bureau, and Ian Adams  
9 and Scott Mertgos [sp?], both Assistant Professors of  
10 Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of  
11 South Carolina.

12 New Yorkers deserve the best of the best working  
13 in every city agency, especially in their Police  
14 Department. The panel on applicant hiring will help  
15 us ensure this, and it is an important step in the  
16 NYPD's future success. That success, though, depends  
17 not only on the resources that we have, but also on  
18 how efficiently and how effectively those resources  
19 are deployed. That is the motivation behind  
20 everything we do and it is the reason for the first  
21 major restructuring of our Patrol Services Bureau in  
31 years, our Bronx Borough split.

For too long, the Bronx has experienced more  
crime per capita than any other borough, all while  
operating under a single Patrol Borough command

1  
2 structure that has not kept pace with the demands  
3 placed on it. And yet, when Manhattan and Brooklyn  
4 and Queens each moved to two Patrol Borough Commands  
5 to handle the volume of work there, the Bronx did  
6 not.

7 Last year, the Bronx accounted for more than  
8 one-third of all shooting incidents and shooting  
9 victims citywide, roughly three times Queens and  
10 Manhattan. The borough recorded more major crimes  
11 than Manhattan and Queens, and nearly the same as  
12 Brooklyn. Bronx residents also generated nearly one  
13 million calls for service last year, more than Queens  
14 and nearly equal to Manhattan. That is why starting  
15 this spring the Bronx will be split into Patrol  
16 Borough Bronx South and Patrol Borough Bronx North,  
17 mirroring the same two Patrol Borough Command  
18 structures as Manhattan, as Brooklyn, and as Queens.  
19 This will bring nearly 200 additional cops and  
20 additional specialized units to the Bronx, including  
21 homicide squad Detectives, evidence collection teams,  
narcotics teams, neighborhood safety teams, and auto  
crime units. Leadership will be closer to the  
communities that they serve, and the command  
structure will finally match the Bronx as it exists

1  
2 today. And we will be in a perfect position to build  
3 on the work our cops are already doing in the Bronx  
4 where major crime is down more than 10 percent so far  
5 this year.

6 The Bronx split is one example of the NYPD's  
7 structure better aligning with its function, but  
8 organizational fixes are not enough. They must be  
9 matched by enhanced investment in the people who do  
10 the actual work. To serve its critical purposes,  
11 policing must evolve along with the world that it  
12 serves.

13 Over time, the complexity of the job changes, the  
14 law changes, the threats change, and the expectations  
15 of the public change, and if we expect our officers  
16 to meet and exceed those ever-shifting standards,  
17 then we have an obligation to prepare them  
18 accordingly. That is why in 2026 we are launching  
19 the most significant overhaul of in-service training  
20 this department has undertaken in decades.

21 We ask a great deal of our officers, many of whom  
serve for 20 or more years, but after the academy,  
the only things officers are consistently required to  
be retrained on are firearms qualification and CPR.  
It is simply not enough, and our cops have been

1  
2 raising this concern for years. They want training  
3 that reflects the situations they are actually  
4 encountering on the streets. They want to know what  
5 they are allowed to do under the law as those laws  
6 change with the times, and they want to know that  
7 when they are called into volatile moments, they are  
8 prepared to protect life and exercise sound judgement  
9 under intense pressure.

10 Now, for the first time, offices will start to  
11 participate in a regular focused, week-long,  
12 in-service training program built around real world  
13 performance, and this will not be a procedural check  
14 the box. The program will ensure officers are  
15 exercising sound tactics and sound judgement with  
16 curriculum to include de-escalation, constitutional  
17 policing and legal standards, and situational  
18 awareness, and again, it will be dynamic, immersive,  
19 and most importantly recurring throughout their NYPD  
20 career.

21 Looking forward to this summer, the NYPD is  
preparing for two major global-scale events taking  
place simultaneously, the 2026 FIFA World Cup and  
Sail 4th 250. Both will bring millions of people to  
New York City over several weeks in June and in July.

1  
2 It is a massive undertaking from a security  
3 standpoint, but New Yorkers should have every  
4 confidence that the men and women of this department  
5 are more than up for it.

6 This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the  
7 September 11th attacks, a reminder of the reality  
8 this department knows better than most. New York  
9 City is not only a global hub, it is a global target.  
10 That truth shapes how we staff, how we train, how we  
11 deploy, and how we build partnerships, because what  
12 begins overseas often finds its way here.

13 In 2025, NYPD investigations led to more than 100  
14 arrests connected to foreign terrorist organizations,  
15 domestic extremists, lone actors, and other serious  
16 threats. Those arrests span eight foreign countries  
17 and nine U.S. states.

18 Today, as armed conflict in Iran spread  
19 throughout the region, we continue to deal with the  
20 repercussions of October 7th, tensions remain high.  
21 The events of March 7th illustrated again that this  
threat is not theoretical. The deadly insidious  
ideology of ISIS spread from the Islamic state to two  
quiet counties in Pennsylvania and then it made its  
way here to New York City. This is amid a spate of

1 terrorism and targeted violence since the onset of  
2 the war in Iran, including multiple incidents  
3 overseas as well as attacks and attempted attacks in  
4 the United States.

5 The ongoing conflict has inspired at least two  
6 lone wolf, home-grown violent extremists to conduct  
7 recent attacks in the U.S., a mass shooting at a bar  
8 in Austin, Texas and a vehicle ramming at a synagogue  
9 in Michigan. And ISIS-aligned attacks have occurred  
10 here in New York and against an ROTC class at Old  
11 Dominion University in Virginia. There have been a  
12 number of recent explosions and arson attacks claimed  
13 by an Iran-aligned militant collective in Europe  
14 which targeted U.S. diplomatic facilities and Jewish  
15 religious and cultural institutions.

16 And add all of this to official statements and  
17 propaganda from the Iranian regime and its proxies  
18 urging retaliation as well as violent rhetoric from  
19 supporters online, and it is clear that we will be in  
20 a heightened state of alert for the foreseeable  
21 future. In fact, in my 18 years in government, I  
have not seen a threat environment quite like this  
one in terms of the multiple- excuse me- in terms of

1  
2 the multitude of vectors that are all active at the  
3 same time.

4 These threats are real. They are deadly serious,  
5 and we must be prepared. To that end, New Yorkers  
6 should know that the NYPD has the most impressive and  
7 sophisticated intelligence and counter-terrorism  
8 operation of any municipal police department in the  
9 world, and that operation rivals the capabilities of  
10 many nations.

11 Our systems include advanced chemical,  
12 biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive  
13 detection equipment. We run the country's premier  
14 intelligence sharing and emergency response platform,  
15 our Domain Awareness System. We employ the nation's  
16 top intelligence analysts, and we have NYPD  
17 detectives stationed in a dozen countries around the  
18 globe. And all of that is on top of the 1,500+  
19 uniformed officers doing intelligence casework and  
20 daily counter-terrorism deployments and  
21 investigations across the city.

22 So, we remain vigilant. We treat every incident  
23 and every threat with urgency and with care, and we  
24 will continue to aggressively and doggedly use all of

1  
2 our available resources to protect the 8.5 million  
3 residents of this city.

4 Now, I want to address an issue that has played  
5 an outsized role in shaping the public safety  
6 environment and cities around the nation, including  
7 our own over the past several months, and that is  
8 federal immigration enforcement operations. On this  
9 point, I will always be clear and unequivocal. The  
10 NYPD does not engage in civil immigration  
11 enforcement, period. We do not ask people about  
12 their immigration status, and we do not do civil  
13 immigration enforcement on behalf of the federal  
14 government. That is the law, and the NYPD will  
15 always follow the law.

16 At the same time, that approach has never  
17 prevented us from working very closely with our  
18 federal partners on serious criminal matters. We  
19 have deeply important partnerships with federal  
20 agencies, and we work side-by-side with them on a  
21 variety of cases that are vital to public safety  
including terrorism, violence, guns, gangs regardless  
of the subject's immigration status. That  
cooperation is so important and it continues. But  
when federal immigration operations come into a city

1  
2 and generate fear and anger and unrest, local police  
3 do not get to walk away from the consequences. They  
4 are the ones who stay, who respond to the next 911  
5 call, who work to keep neighborhoods stable and who  
6 have to rebuild trust that may have been damaged by  
7 actions that they themselves did not take. That  
8 makes their job harder and our communities less safe.

9       The New York City Department of Investigation  
10 recently released a detailed report regarding the  
11 NYPD's policies and procedures, and connected with  
12 immigration matters. It found that "The NYPD has  
13 been working diligently to ensure that its policies  
14 with respect to assisting federal law enforcement  
15 agencies comply with local laws while still  
16 permitting the NYPD to partner with federal law  
17 enforcement on criminal investigations." It made  
18 seven recommendations for the NYPD to further improve  
19 its practices, and we have agreed to implement all of  
20 them.

21       Now, turning to the Mayor's Preliminary Budget  
and its impact on the NYPD and the coming fiscal  
year. In totality, the NYPD's fiscal year 2027  
expense budget is \$6.7 billion, a vast majority of  
which, 91 percent, is allocated for personnel costs.

1  
2 The remaining nine percent is dedicated to  
3 non-personnel costs which include costs for  
4 technology that provides officers with immediate  
5 access to critical safety equipment, tools, and  
6 applications. As part of the Preliminary Budget,  
7 over \$400 million in new funding is included in the  
8 current fiscal year, and approximately \$300 million  
9 in the baseline to address shortfalls in several  
10 areas of current operations, including overtime,  
11 information technology, the Domain Awareness System,  
12 our emergency response vehicles, auto parts, and  
13 overtime.

14 This funding also supports key initiatives  
15 including the new Patrol Borough Bronx South and  
16 costs associated with safeguarding the FIFA World  
17 Cup. The Preliminary Budget begins to address the  
18 historical underfunding of overtime by providing  
19 necessary funding in the current fiscal year and  
20 addresses significant new needs posed by structural  
21 gaps in the later years of the financial plan.

18 The fiscal year 2026 all funds overtime budget is  
19 now \$929 million. Fiscal year 2027 is now \$776  
20 million, and the overtime budget is \$786 million for  
21 FY28 and beyond. The Department will continue to

1  
2 monitor overtime spending to guarantee its efficiency  
3 and to ensure that straight time resources are used  
4 whenever and wherever possible.

5 In addition to the operating budget, the  
6 Department's 10-year Capital Budget is \$1.4 billion  
7 for fiscal years 2026 through 2035. This funding is  
8 critical for facility construction projects,  
9 including a renovated firearms training facility,  
10 communications and other information technology  
11 infrastructure, large vehicles life-cycle  
12 replacements including ESU trucks, tow trucks, boats,  
13 and helicopters, as well as camera, boat engines and  
14 police lab equipment.

15 This year's Federal Homeland Security grant  
16 funding has been cut by 40 percent from federal  
17 fiscal year 2024 levels with the NYPD anticipating a  
18 reduction of \$36 million, though the final award has  
19 not been issued yet. In addition, the Department did  
20 not receive any funding tied to the Port Security  
21 grant program which historically has averaged more  
22 than \$6 million per year.

23 We cannot overstate the gravity of this. It is  
24 not bureaucratic inconvenience. It is a direct  
25 threat to the NYPD's ability to maintain and enhance

1 critical counter-terrorism and intelligence  
2 operations in New York City, the most visible terror  
3 target in the United States.

4 People are alive today because of these grants.  
5 We must never lose sight of that. And I want to be  
6 clear, because of the nature of how these multiyear  
7 grants are distributed, this funding gap is not a  
8 problem now today, but if it goes unaddressed it will  
9 be a problem two years from now.

10 So, the time to act is today, and I will not stop  
11 pressing this issue until the federal government  
12 restores the funding and the resources that we need  
13 to keep New Yorkers safe. 2025 was a year of  
14 historic achievements by the NYPD, across our  
15 precincts, our transit districts and housing  
16 developments. We set high expectations, and then we  
17 exceeded them. The work is not finished, of course,  
18 and every New Yorker should know that their Police  
19 Department stands ready to protect them at all cost.

20 I often say that policing is the noblest  
21 profession there is and I believe that  
wholeheartedly. The job exposes these officers to  
things that most people will never see, and it puts  
them in situations that most people could never

1  
2 handle, but they can and they do, every tour, every  
3 radio run, every time this city needs them.

4 That is the promise that our department makes the  
5 people we serve, and police officers are the keepers  
6 of that promise, and this is rhetoric. It is real  
7 life. Eleven days ago when two ISIS-inspired  
8 terrorists attacked a protest in front of Gracie  
9 Mansion, their plan was to kill as many as possible.  
10 When they ignited and threw those two IEDs loaded  
11 with highly-explosive material, metal shrapnel and  
12 glass, the crowd of people ran away.

13 Others, though, ran in, a select few. Operating  
14 on their instinct to position themselves between the  
15 threat and the threatened who without hesitation put  
16 the safety of complete strangers above their own, the  
17 men and women of the NYPD.

18 That is the quiet courage and the uncommon valor  
19 that define these officers and their heroic work is  
20 what we are here to discuss today. So, I thank you  
21 for the opportunity to testify this morning, and my  
staff and I now look forward to answering your  
questions.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so  
much, Commissioner, for your testimony. We have many

1  
2 questions, but before we move onto our questions,  
3 we'll pass it on to our Public Advocate, Jumaane  
4 Williams, for his opening statement.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you, Chair Feliz  
6 and Madam Speaker and members of all the committees  
7 who are here today. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane  
8 Williams, Public Advocate of the City of New York.  
9 Thanks for giving me the opportunity to say an  
10 opening statement.

11 Before I begin my repaired remarks, I just want  
12 to say, Commissioner, thank you for always having  
13 these conversations even when they're tough. I  
14 really appreciate the ability to have those  
15 conversations, and I know that we sometimes have some  
16 disagreements, some significant, but on particular  
17 decisions, I do want to say I do believe your  
18 leadership has provided a stabilizing force for NYPD  
19 at a time when it was needed, and therefore was a net  
20 positive.

21 So, I just want to say that.

JESSICA TISCH: Thank you.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: And I am thankful that  
the crime numbers have gone down. So, I think  
obviously as partners NYPD takes credit for that.

1  
2 It's going down nationally, but some of those numbers  
3 you've exceeded. I do want to just point out that  
4 they've gone down even with the bail reform laws, the  
5 Raise the Age, and the often misaligned How Many  
6 Stops Act, and so the sky did not fall. We've been  
7 doing okay. And my comments- also, I won't be here  
8 for the Criminal Justice Committee, so these are kind  
9 of combined. But we do know that the NYPD is by far  
10 the biggest and most expensive Police Department in  
11 the country. Too often it also serves as social  
12 service functions that are not as appropriate as they  
13 should be and could be reassigned to other agencies.  
14 We should all aim, I believe, to have the NYPD have a  
15 very limited role in responding to some of the things  
16 that other agencies could be doing.

17 That could be people experiencing homelessness or  
18 mental health crisis. The immediate dispatch,  
19 sometimes the only dispatch of police to remove  
20 people who are perceived as homeless or experiencing  
21 symptoms of mental health, is not the best use of the  
city's resources in that regard. The city instead  
has to continue to invest in non-police responses to  
people in mental health crisis, community-based  
mental health services, subsidized housing, respite

1  
2 and drop-in centers, things that dramatically  
3 decrease the likelihood of the need for intervention  
4 in places like the subway and likewise there are a  
5 plethora of noted and data-proven violence prevention  
6 and recidivism reduction programs that we can invest  
7 in as well.

8 In 2025, the city paid more than \$117 million in  
9 police misconduct lawsuit settlements. Though this  
10 number is about half of the last year's settlement  
11 total, it does reflect the largest number of  
12 complaints since 2019 at 1,044 complaints. Though  
13 more than half of the cases settled were 20 years  
14 old, predating both the Mamdani and Adams  
15 administration, we continue to see cases seeking  
16 millions of dollars in damages as a result of police  
17 misconduct.

18 NYPD is the agency that cost the city the most in  
19 settlements which underscores the need for real and  
20 timely accountability for misconduct. I also note  
21 the difficulty sometimes of doing the job. Not  
everybody wants to be arrested even if everyone else  
agree that they should be.

Then Comptroller Brad Lander recommended in a  
report last year that the NYPD and all city agencies

1  
2 be financially responsible for settlements by  
3 absorbing some of their own settlement costs. Under  
4 the Adams Administration, the Civilian Complaint  
5 Review Board, CCRB, has been critically underfunded  
6 and understaffed. At the end of 2023, the CCRB  
7 announced that due to staffing shortages and budget  
8 cuts, it would no longer be investigating certain  
9 categories of police misconduct. This included  
10 claims that against NYPD officers for threats,  
11 property seizures, untruthful statements,  
12 discourteous words or actions, or refusal to provide  
13 their name or shield number.

14 The CCRB must receive adequate funding and  
15 headcount to effectively oversee the NYPD and  
16 investigate all forms of misconduct. Robust and  
17 oversight accountability is not an attack on law  
18 enforcement. It helps build trust with the  
19 communities which in turn make members of the public  
20 more likely to report crimes and participate in the  
21 legal process which makes us all safer. I do want to  
thank the administration for a change in leadership  
at CCRB. Hopefully, we can reverse some of these  
things that occurred.

1  
2 It is also vital to adequately and robustly fund  
3 public defender services, which are free legal  
4 defense services for anyone who needs them are  
5 mandated by federal law and local law. These  
6 organizations are consistently under-funded.  
7 Low-income New Yorkers ultimately face the  
8 consequences of a budget that favors District  
9 Attorneys often and deprived of the robust legal  
10 representation that they deserve.

11 A broad range of nonprofits that have city  
12 contracts to provide services to New Yorkers  
13 including those that provide legal services have  
14 repeatedly reported that the city makes payments far  
15 too late or sometimes not at all. I do believe that  
16 the main question that we have to continue asking is  
17 where, when, and why we use police. Just continuing  
18 training, which I think they are good, are sometimes  
19 what I call the wack-a-mole laws, may not get to what  
20 we want. So hopefully we can start moving from being  
21 tough on crime to being serious about safety and  
funding all the things that I've been speaking about.  
And I do want to shout out that picture of Chief  
Aarons, Aaron Edwards [sp?], could be a great  
recruitment tool, but I am aware that people run to

1  
2 danger when we call, allowing New Yorkers to run  
3 away. And so freeing them up to the best kind of  
4 thing they can do for those kind of calls would be  
5 great. Sorry.

6 I refuse to wear reading glasses. Sometimes I  
7 get stuck. I appreciate it. Alright, I think that's  
8 it for me. Thank you. And I am excited about that  
9 review of applicant hiring. I'd love to hear more  
10 about that. We had a lot of complaints particularly  
11 in the Black community. They get edged out at times  
12 they shouldn't. So, thank you very much, appreciate  
13 it.

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Public  
15 Advocate, and thank you, Commissioner, for your  
16 testimony again. My colleagues and I have many  
17 questions about many topics including headcount,  
18 retention, recruitment, overtime, quality of life  
19 issues, also many policy issues that we look forward  
20 to hearing about. My understanding is that we've  
21 made some progress, so we look forward to getting  
data from you on the progress that we've made, and of  
course, look forward to discussing issues that need  
attention, including as I mentioned earlier, crime in

1  
2 the Bronx. The numbers coming related to the Bronx  
3 are extremely alarming and concerning.

4 I also look forward to hearing about issues  
5 including school safety agents. My understanding is  
6 that there's a 10 percent vacancy, which is having a  
7 negative effect on communities that they serve. So,  
8 we have many questions that we look forward to  
9 getting to. So, first, I'll pass it on to Speaker  
10 Julie Menin for her questions.

11 SPEAKER MENIN: Thank you so much, Chair. Thank  
12 you, Commissioner, for your testimony today, and I  
13 know we've got a number of questions. So, I'm going  
14 to start in the first round and then probably go back  
15 in a second round, since I know we have a lot of  
16 colleagues here.

17 So, I want to first of all start with the  
18 headcount, which you talked about a little bit in  
19 your testimony. So, in the November Plan, the  
20 previous administration added funding to increase  
21 NYPD's headcount by 5,000 officers by fiscal 2029.  
The Prelim Plan removes that funding leaving NYPD's  
budgeted uniform headcount at approximately 35,000  
offices.

1  
2 Looking back to 2001, NYPD's budget supported  
3 approximately 40,000 officers and 8,400 civilians.  
4 Since that time, the uniformed headcount has dropped  
5 by 5,000 officers, but the civilian headcount has  
6 increased by approximately 5,500 positions. So, we  
7 first of all want to understand that change better.  
8 Can you speak to that change?

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: You mean the fact that we  
10 have fewer NYPD officers now than we did in 2001?

11 SPEAKER MENIN: That and why is the core position  
12 of uniformed offices fallen by 13 percent, but  
13 civilian positions grew by 66 percent. So, we're  
14 just trying to understand the overall numbers?

15 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, you're saying in the  
16 past 25 years?

17 SPEAKER MENIN: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay. So, right now, the  
19 Department's authorized headcount is 35,000 uniform-  
20 approximately 35,000 uniformed positions. We ended  
21 last year at virtually that headcount. So, I just  
want to make clear to this Council that the hiring  
crisis that we had previously experienced, I think we  
are past, and we are confident that we can continue  
to do enough hiring to remain at our headcount.

1  
2 I cannot personally speak to what officers were  
3 doing in 2001 and how they were allocated across the  
4 Department, or frankly even what the staffing numbers  
5 were at that time. The best I can say is that right  
6 now the NYPD ended 2025 with a uniform headcount that  
7 was several hundred officers more than it has been  
8 average for the past three or four years.

9 SPEAKER MENIN: Okay. I mean, building on that-  
10 so in fiscal 2018 there were approximately 37,000  
11 uniform positions in NYPD. Five years later there  
12 were approximately 34,000 officers and approximately  
13 10 percent drop. At the same time in fiscal 2018,  
14 there were approximately 96,000 major felony crimes.  
15 By fiscal 2023, there were approximately 127,000  
16 major felony crimes. 2025, 121,723. So, for some of  
17 those numbers that's the most that we've seen since  
18 Fiscal 2006, almost 20 years ago. So how many  
19 officers would you need to bring major felony crime  
20 back down to the pre-pandemic levels?

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, first of all, crime  
rates are not just a function of how many officers  
you have. There are lots of different things that go  
into it. So I can't answer that question directly,  
but what I will say is this- I think this is what

1  
2 you're getting at- in an ideal world, would I love to  
3 have more cops? Absolutely. But in a realistic  
4 world of limited resources, I believe that the 35,000  
5 number that are at now is strong. Could it be  
6 stronger? Of course. But in my 18 years in  
7 government, I've been- learned to be quite practical  
8 about budgetary constraints and other types of  
9 constraints. The way I like to approach budgeting  
10 and asking for additional resources is really  
11 project-based.

12 So, I don't want to say, hey Council, can I have  
13 5,000 more officers? What I'd like to do and how I'd  
14 like to work with you is to come with you with  
15 specific initiatives. Like, for example, the Bronx  
16 Borough Split and say, hi Speaker, this- I'd like to  
17 split the Bronx in two. My estimation is that it  
18 will require 200 additional officers, an increased  
19 headcount in that way. I think that that is the best  
20 and most responsible way to approach NYPD headcount.

21 SPEAKER MENIN: Okay. And I know the Chair will  
22 have a number of questions about the Bronx that he  
23 wants to ask. Hate crime prevention which you talked  
24 about. So, we're very concerned obviously in the  
25 rise of hate crimes with 53 percent against the

1  
2 Jewish community, but also in the Muslim community up  
3 about 69 percent as well and in other categories. We  
4 are hearing time and time again from many New Yorkers  
5 that hate crimes are actually under-reported because  
6 some are a victim of a hate crime, but for many  
7 reasons do not report it. So, the question that I  
8 have is what can be done about that? What resources  
9 has NYPD dedicated to preventing and responding to  
10 hate crimes? Where are there areas of improvement?

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: As I mentioned in my  
12 testimony, the NYPD has the premier investigative  
13 unit looking at hate crimes in the country, our Hate  
14 Crimes Taskforce. If you'd like to get into- do you  
15 want to get into the staffing of that? Basically,  
16 there's a few main components. We have our Hate  
17 Crimes Taskforce which investigates complaints of  
18 hate crimes, and then we have outreach efforts,  
19 largely led by our Community Affairs Bureau where we  
20 encourage people to report all sorts of crimes, but  
21 of course, particularly hate crimes.

22 SPEAKER MENIN: So, last week, Gothamist reported  
23 that the NYPD has changed its reporting on hate  
24 crimes from those that were being reviewed to only  
25 those that are being investigated and confirmed. Can

1  
2 you explain what prompted this change and why not  
3 track both figures, as there were experts in the  
4 article that mentioned this could lead to an  
5 under-reporting of certain hate crimes, particularly  
6 antisemitic ones?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I believe in  
8 transparency. I also believe that the numbers that  
9 the NYPD was previously reporting were conflicting,  
10 wrong, and confusing. What- my opinion, what we  
11 should be reporting on is confirmed instances of hate  
12 crimes.

13 Sometimes, crimes are reported one way and they  
14 don't end up being a hate crime, or sometimes they're  
15 not reported as a hate crime, and then they do end up  
16 being a hate crime. So, I think if we really want to  
17 understand the hate crime universe, the best way to  
18 report on hate crimes is through confirmed hate  
19 crimes, and we have been putting that number out  
20 always and forever, but we'd also been putting out a  
21 second number which made no sense, and that was  
"reports of hate crimes." But what reports of hate  
crimes included was everything up until the end of  
the month that had been looked at and confirmed as a  
hate crime, plus any reports that we hadn't yet had

1  
2 an opportunity to look at and confirm. And so it  
3 didn't- that number was not a reflection of any  
4 reality, and in my opinion, I'd like to provide  
5 meaningful data to the public. So, we started  
6 reporting the confirmed cases of hate crimes.

7  
8 SPEAKER MENIN: And so in terms of the ones that  
9 are under review, will there be any reporting of  
10 those that are under review, but not confirmed?

11  
12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure. We update the numbers  
13 every month. I mean, we're very transparent with the  
14 hate crime numbers. So, in March, you'll get  
15 everything updated through February and January. And  
16 so I just- this was done in an effort to more  
17 accurately reflect the reality of hate crimes in New  
18 York City.

19  
20 SPEAKER MENIN: Okay, so-

21  
22 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] To give you an  
23 example, when Gothamist wrote that story, the  
24 difference between confirmed hate crimes at the end  
25 of February and that other number that we had been  
26 reporting was one.

27  
28 So, it does not make- it does not make a huge  
29 difference in terms of understanding the overall  
30 picture of hate crimes in New York City.

1  
2           SPEAKER MENIN: Okay, understood. Department  
3 overtime has obviously been a major concern. I know  
4 you talked about it extensively in your testimony  
5 because in prior years to years, the projections were  
6 not being met. I know you've taken a number of very  
7 positive steps toward reigning in overtime, but this  
8 morning Politico reported that the Department is on  
9 track to surpass its overtime budget in fiscal 2026  
10 by roughly \$400 million.

11           So, what is the current projection for overtime  
12 spending in fiscal 26? What was the overtime budget  
13 for the fiscal year and can you explain the  
14 difference to the Committee?

15           COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure, I can. Our fiscal  
16 overtime budget- Kristine, do you want to give these  
17 exact numbers?

18           DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Sure. So, the current  
19 fiscal year 26 overtime budget is \$929.4 million and  
20 our projection for this year is \$1,028,000, and most  
21 of that difference will be additional grant funding  
that we anticipate will be reflected in the budget  
between now and adoption.

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I want to just- I want to  
3 be clear that our projection of \$1.03 billion is \$100  
4 million less than last year.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And last year was \$100  
6 million less than the previous year. So, I don't  
7 want in like the big numbers to have the progress  
8 that we've made get lost in it.

8 SPEAKER MENIN: Understood. Are there plans to  
9 reducing to overtime spending further and what  
10 resources if any would help you meet the budgeted  
11 target in-

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] So, we have-  
12 we've- the way we have been so successful in reducing  
13 overtime, 14 percent last fiscal year and 12 percent  
14 last calendar year, was by implementing our overtime  
15 management plan.

15 Basically, as far as I can tell, before last  
16 January, overtime was not being managed at the New  
17 York City Police Department. People were working as  
18 much overtime as they wanted, and it was just- didn't  
19 seem to be a responsibility of supervision or  
20 management in the Department. That all changed in  
21 January of last year where we now set specific limits

1  
2 or caps on the amount of overtime any officer can  
3 work each month. Those limits change month to month  
4 and it's based on what's going on in the city at that  
5 time.

6 So, for example, February is the shortest month  
7 of the year. It also has the smallest number of  
8 large events and gatherings because the weather is so  
9 cold. So the cap for February will be, for example,  
10 less than the cap for July when we're going to have  
11 FIFA and Sail 250. And at every level of supervision  
12 and management there is responsibility for ensuring  
13 that officers don't exceed the caps or in very  
14 specific limited circumstances where it's necessary  
15 that there is proper explanation that is approved.

16 SPEAKER MENIN: Speak- continuing on the overtime  
17 topic, what's the status of the Department's  
18 investigation into overtime abuse in the  
19 administrative offices of former Chief of Department  
20 Jeff Madrey and other high-ranking officials at One  
21 Police Plaza, and can you indicate if any officers  
have been disciplined or referred to law enforcement  
in addition as part of that investigation, and if so,  
how many?

1  
2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: As we previously  
3 disclosed- this goes back a while, but there's an  
4 ongoing federal investigation. Really can't speak to  
5 that. And then in terms of internal discipline, yes,  
6 there were a number of cases pursued by IAB. There  
7 was internal discipline imposed in connection with  
8 that. I don't think we have the data here on that.  
9 We certainly can provide data to the Council in terms  
10 of those, the outcomes of those IAB matters.

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: But I want to be clear, when  
12 the feds start investigating something, it ties our  
13 hands administratively in terms of what we can do,  
14 and we made the judgement to refer some of this to  
15 the feds for them to investigate.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: If I could just add  
17 to that? Part of what's going on is when you have a  
18 federal investigation, we want to make sure that  
19 we're not doing anything in terms of our  
20 investigation that would somehow interfere or  
21 compromise-

SPEAKER MENIN: [interposing] Understood.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: Or make it more  
difficult for the federal investigators.

SPEAKER MENIN: Right.

1  
2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: So, there are times  
3 when in the normal course we might take certain  
4 actions and we stay our hand to make sure that the  
5 federal investigation is not hindered in any way.

6 SPEAKER MENIN: Can you- in that vein, are you  
7 able to comment. We know that of one NYPD member  
8 that the Department tried to claw back money from,  
9 are you able to recoup- are you able to comment on  
10 any others that you've recouped funds from because  
11 this is city money, clearly.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: Understood. I  
13 really prefer not to speak to what really are  
14 ongoing- an ongoing federal matter, and obviously  
15 there may well - or there will come a time when we'll  
16 be able to say more about that. But at least right  
17 now, I would prefer to defer to the federal  
18 investigation.

19 SPEAKER MENIN: Okay, two more areas of questions  
20 and then I'm going to come back on the second round  
21 and turn it over to the Chair. On the issue of  
22 accountability, last January, Commissioner, you  
23 ordered a review of the NYPD's Confidential Rental  
24 and Leasing Office program which provides undercover  
25 vehicles for NYPD members engaged in investigations,

1  
2 utilizing federal dollars, amid rumors that it was  
3 being abused by high-ranking officials. You gave  
4 until June 30th, 2025 for the program to come into  
5 compliance. What were the results of the NYPD  
6 review?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The results of it were  
8 galling. We had executives that had multiple, three,  
9 four, five, CRALO, meaning rented, kitted out  
10 vehicles assigned to them personally. It was out of  
11 all control. We also had these confidential vehicles  
12 being used in parts of the Department that don't do  
13 confidential investigations. And so what we've done  
14 quite immediately, I think by last June, we fixed all  
15 of this. We took the CRALO vehicles away from the  
16 executives. We ensured that executives were assigned  
17 a single car and not multiple cars, and we also made  
18 sure that the CRALO vehicles were only being used in  
19 the investigative commands where they would be- where  
20 they were supposed to be used.

21 SPEAKER MENIN: And were any NYPD members either  
current or former disciplined or criminally charged  
as a result?

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No, because it was  
3 sanctioned by the- they weren't- it was sanctioned by  
4 the Department at the time.

5 SPEAKER MENIN: They were sanctioned by the  
6 Department.

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes, they weren't- it didn't  
8 appear that they were doing it under the radar.  
9 Their bosses had allowed them to do it. It was  
10 approved.

11 SPEAKER MENIN: And how has the program been  
12 reformed as a result of this-

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Well, I just  
14 went through it. Executives don't have CRALO cars.  
15 All executives now have one car, and CRALO vehicles  
16 are assigned only to the commands where they should  
17 be assigned, like for example our Intelligence  
18 Bureau, Detective Bureau.

19 SPEAKER MENIN: Okay. You talked in your  
20 testimony about sanctuary city law compliance. So,  
21 the Council recently heard from DOI on NYPD and DOC's  
compliance with sanctuary city laws. At that hearing  
we heard that NYPD made robust attempts to ensure  
that there aren't additional instances of officers  
violating sanctuary city laws.

1  
2 One of the recommendations which NYPD accepted  
3 was to scrutinize federal law requests more heavily  
4 to ensure they aren't related to civil immigration  
5 enforcement.

6 So, a couple questions in that regard. How many  
7 officers are assigned to federal taskforces, and what  
8 additional training is given to the officers assigned  
9 to the taskforces to understand and comply with  
10 sanctuary city laws in regard to information sharing?

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Hold on. I have the number  
12 right here. I just need to pull it up in my binder.  
13 Alright, so assigned to federal taskforces- where's  
14 the total here- 416 officers are assigned to varying  
15 federal taskforces, the largest of which is the Joint  
16 Terrorism Taskforce.

17 SPEAKER MENIN: And last question before I pass  
18 it back to the Chair, and then I'll come back on the  
19 second round. I do want to say on the record, I'm  
20 deeply concerned about the federal cuts that you  
21 referred to in terms of counter-terrorism funding.  
This is something that we care very deeply about and  
that we want to partner with you in terms of pushing  
back for more funding and for the restoration of  
funding.

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you much, Speaker.

3  
4 SPEAKER MENIN: So let me turn it back to the  
5 Chair.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you much-  
8 so much, Speaker, for the questions. So, I'll start  
9 with questions related to headcount and recruitment.  
10 You addressed some of these issues during your  
11 opening statement, but I'll still ask them again just  
12 to set the context for future questions.

13  
14 So, last year during the budget hearing you  
15 mentioned that we are in a hiring crisis and to quote  
16 what you mentioned, "We are in a hiring crisis, not  
17 due to budget issues, but because the applicants are  
18 not there. We're practically begging applicants to  
19 take the exam."

20  
21 And by the way, I watched and rewatched many of  
22 those 10-hour hearings which I enjoyed watching.  
23 Very informative. Yeah, so just want to ask a few  
24 follow-up questions on that. So, just to be crystal  
25 clear. So the budgeted headcount and the actual  
26 headcount is approximately 35,000.

27  
28 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yeah the budget headcount is  
29 35,025, and at the end of calendar year, the actual  
30 headcount was 34,769, 250 shy of authorized.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Due to recruitment and  
3 headcount issues, you may have some changes including  
4 changing the college credit requirement, lowering it  
5 from 60 to 24, and also allowing credits to be earned  
6 through the police academy. So talk to us about some  
7 of those recruitment initiatives, how effective were  
8 they?

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yeah, those were some of the  
10 things we did. You mentioned reducing the college  
11 credit requirements, which we saw a big uptick in  
12 applicants from there. We also did monthly and free  
13 police officer exams, working with DCAS or to give  
14 the test every month rather than periodically and no  
15 fee associated with the test. That was very helpful.  
16 And the big piece that I didn't hear you talk about  
17 was we worked very closely with our fraternal  
18 organizations.

19 You know, the NYPD has dozens of fraternal  
20 organizations to ensure that in our recruitment  
21 effort that we are reaching every neighborhood in the  
city, and I have to thank our fraternal organizations  
who have stepped up and worked so closely with our  
personnel team in recruitment to really turn the tide  
here.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: So, we've all heard about  
3 police officers leaving the force, leaving for many  
4 reasons, and not too long ago I spoke with a friend  
5 who became a police officer. In less than two years  
6 he left to work as an MTA cop. And you know, my  
7 first question as the Public Safety Chair was why,  
8 why did he leave so fast? And was it due to salary  
9 issues? And he actually said no. He said it was  
10 actually due to quality of life issues, including  
11 forced overtime and etcetera that makes it difficult  
12 for some police officers to want to stay there, given  
13 that forced overtime could have many different  
14 effects on people's lives in general. So, just  
15 curious, what are the top issues that people have  
16 left, and also where does quality of life and forced  
17 overtime rank?

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I want to let the  
19 officers speak for themselves on this topic and  
20 frankly speak through their unions, but what I can  
21 say on the overtime piece of it, the vast majority of  
overtime in this department is voluntary, and  
officers clamor for it. And I discussed before in  
the Speaker's questioning how we manage that overtime  
that we send- set caps that are based on the events

1  
2 that are going on month-to-month, and that it's  
3 managed month-to-month.

4 One area where we were seeing particular problems  
5 with forced overtime was associated with the  
6 Department's use of 12-hour tours. Because we had  
7 fewer appearances, fewer people were working on any  
8 given day, and so in my opinion, 12-hour tours was  
9 not rolled out thoughtfully in this Department and we  
10 have done a lot of work over the past several months  
11 to address that and clean up that mess.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: In what cases are police  
13 officers forced to work overtime versus voluntary,  
14 and also, how much notice are they generally  
15 provided. Are they told 20 minutes before their  
16 shift is over, or any rules on that?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, there are a number of  
18 different cases in which they could be- have to work  
19 overtime. If they're working, for example, a detail,  
20 like a parade and the event is not done at the time  
21 of their tour, then they'll have to work overtime.  
If they make an arrest towards the end of their tour  
and the arrest needs to be processed, then they will  
have to work overtime. If - those are, I think, the  
biggest categories of the forced overtime.

1  
2 As part of our violence reduction, if we want  
3 officers to remain on foot post two hours later into  
4 the evening, then we'll ask them to stay on two hours  
5 longer. When we do force overtime, we try to give as  
6 much notice as possible.

7 For example, when the Chief decides for a weekend  
8 that we need officers to work two hours later on  
9 their violence reduction foot post, he'll try to make  
10 that decision early in the week so that they know  
11 several days in advance that that's what is going to  
12 be asked of them.

13 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. You mentioned this  
14 during your testimony, but I'll ask again just so the  
15 numbers could be very clear. Can you summarize the  
16 overtime budget for the past four years, uniform and  
17 also civilian?

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Let me pull up those numbers  
19 for you. Alright, for the past- you want the past 10  
20 years?

21 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Past three years.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Past three years.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: FY 24 and on.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay. FY24 uniform was \$954  
million, civilian was \$137 million. The total was

1  
2 \$1.092 billion. FY 25 uniform is \$959 million.  
3 Civilian was \$145 million. The total was \$1.105  
4 billion. And you want our projections for-

5 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] For FY26 and  
6 also how much has been spent so far?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, for FY 26, the  
8 projection is \$880 million uniform and \$148 million  
9 civilian for a total of \$1.028 billion. Keep in mind  
10 that that includes FIFA and it includes an  
11 unprecedented number of officers working overtime  
12 foot post funded by the Governor in the transit  
13 system. As for your question about how much has been  
14 spent so far this year, so far between the two we are  
15 at \$612 million for July through January.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: For uniform and civilian, for  
17 both?

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yep.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What are steps being taken to  
20 continue with those in overtime? I know you  
21 mentioned not too long ago there were no systems.  
People basically did whatever they wanted. What are  
systems in place?

1  
2           COMMISSIONER TISCH: I've never seen anything  
3 like it in my almost 20 years in government. The  
4 steps are- this is not rocket science.

5           Overtime, it is a responsibility of management to  
6 manage overtime and budget. It's a pretty basic one.  
7 It doesn't change agency to agency. It's a constant  
8 in city government. And so we implemented a very  
9 thoughtful and normal overtime reduction plan which  
10 basically said to every executive, every bureau, and  
11 frankly every supervisor and manager that overtime is  
12 one of the things that you have to manage, and the  
13 committee is chaired by our First Deputy Commissioner  
14 and our Deputy Commissioner of Management and Budget.  
15 They'll work with the Chief of Department to  
16 understand what's going on in the city over the next  
17 month, and they'll set the cap in the middle of the  
18 previous month for the next month so we can  
19 communicate it to everyone, and then the First Deputy  
20 Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of  
21 Management and Budget keep track of it week to week  
and call in executives if they're seeing that a  
bureau or a command or an office is spiking and seems  
to be off course.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: How many hours, let's say per  
3 month, does the average police officer do in  
4 overtime?

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Oh, I have that here. Let me  
6 find it for you. Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And also, do you think that  
8 we could decrease overtime without increasing  
9 headcount?

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, sorry, your question was  
11 how many hours of overtime does an average police  
12 officer work?

13 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right.

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: For calendar year 2025, on  
15 average officers earn 308 hours of overtime per year.  
16 If you go back to like the time when we had the  
17 scandal [sic], I recall seeing some officers- wasn't  
18 it working like over 100 hours of overtime in a  
19 month? So, this is much more in line with reality  
20 than what the situation used to be.

21 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. So approximately 30  
hours per month, a little less, 25 to 30 hours per  
month if my math is correct. Do you think we can  
decrease overtime spending without increasing  
headcount?

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: That is a very difficult  
3 question to answer. I believe that this Department  
4 needs to manage our overtime budget just as any and  
5 every city agency does, and we will continue to put  
6 administrative guidelines in place to make sure that  
the overtime budget is managed appropriately.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What are steps you think we  
8 can take to continue making progress on that? I mean  
9 \$1 billion in overtime, that's a lot of money in  
overtime.

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: It's also a reality, and if  
11 you look back on the past several years and you  
12 normalize it for today's contract dollars, it's  
13 pretty in line with recent history. We see the  
14 bigger sticker price, because our officers are  
15 rightfully paid more than they were paid five years  
ago and 10 years ago.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What categories of overtime  
17 spending have seen the largest change and why?

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Transit for sure, because  
19 working with the Governor, she has funded since last  
20 January a significant number of additional officers  
21 to work overtime- voluntary overtime posts in our

1 transit system. And so that is something that is  
2 new, net new.

3 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. So, I'll move on to  
4 questions related to policy, and then I'll pass it on  
5 to colleagues who have questions, and then I'll come  
6 back for a second round of questions. I'd also like  
7 to recognise that we've been joined by Council  
8 Members Brewer, Nurse, and Ariola.

9 So, a few questions related to policy, and these  
10 are questions that I'm asking because these are  
11 conversations that we're all having. I'm asking  
12 these questions without taking a position on any of  
13 the topics. My position could be discussed at  
14 another time. But curious. So, I guess if we could  
15 be super brief.

16 I'm hoping to not spend too much on these policy  
17 questions. We're hoping to get the most information  
18 regarding the budget, but hopefully we'll spend no  
19 more than a minute per question on these policy  
20 issues. How many Stops Act, has the NYPD have had  
21 any issues with compliance with this law, including  
budget issues?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Not in my experience.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Gang database, as we know the  
3 NYPD has a criminal group database. People also call  
4 it the gang database to track different members of  
5 different street gangs and criminal groups. Talk to  
6 us about the purpose and also how many people are in  
7 the database currently? My understanding is that the  
8 NYPD has been removing individuals. When are  
9 individuals removed and talk to us about some numbers  
10 on that?

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The gang database- try to do  
12 this all in less than a minute. The gang database is  
13 critical for deployment in particular in response to  
14 shootings or other krewe-related violence. We need  
15 to act immediately when there is a shooting to plan  
16 for retaliatory shootings.

17 So, it's important to know which person is  
18 associated with what gang or krewe. There are other  
19 reasons, but for the sake of brevity, that's a big  
20 one. There are a little under 8,000 individuals in  
21 the database as compared to 2019. There has been a  
56 percent drop in the number of individuals in that  
database. When it comes to removals, it is not  
factors, it's actually strict rules. If someone has  
been in the database for three years- for a juvenile,

1  
2 actually, it's two years- they automatically need to  
3 be reviewed. They must be removed from the database  
4 unless one, during that period they were arrested for  
5 a violent crime, possession of a weapon or any other  
6 crime committed in furtherance of the group's  
7 activities, and two, they are- or two, they're on  
8 parole or probation, or three, they are in custody.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: SRG- thank you so much for  
10 that data and for the information. SRG, how is this  
11 different from over a protest response? There was a  
12 protest, as we know, three weeks ago when individuals  
13 brought explosives to the protest. You mentioned  
14 that SRG was there to respond if needed. At what  
15 point would they have intervened? Also, the mayor  
16 stated that he wants to disband the SRG Unit. Have  
17 you had conversations about this, and is this still  
18 the plan?

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I am aware of the mayor's  
20 concerns about SRG, and yes, we have had  
21 conversations about it. Consistent with Department  
policy and the protest settlement, SRG is not on-site  
at the beginning of a protest. That is not new  
policy in this administration. That is as a result  
of a protest settlement that was made years ago that

1  
2 has now kicked in. To the extent that a protest is  
3 peaceful and lawful and we are not making any  
4 arrests, it's going to be primarily our Community  
5 Affairs officers and sometimes patrol officers who  
6 will people policing the protests. SRG is not  
7 deployed in those instances. If we see criminal  
8 activity at a protest and we are going to make  
9 arrests, then SRG may be deployed consistent with the  
10 protest settlement to take enforcement action. But  
11 to put this in context, in 2025 we had 4,255 protests  
12 that the NYPD facilitated in New York City. SRG was  
13 on standby- was available at 245 of those protests.  
14 That's under six percent. And they were called in to  
15 make arrests at 41 or one percent of last year's  
16 protests.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: If the SRG is disbanded, will  
18 this frustrate your ability to keep people safe  
19 during protest and also, what have recent  
20 conversations been on this issue with the Mayor and-

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Well, I'm not  
going to discuss private conversations with the  
mayor, but I will say that I will never do anything  
that is not in the best of the interest of the New

1  
2 York City Police Department and the people of the  
3 City of New York.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Is it safe to say that  
5 conversations are still being had to disband?

6 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Moving onto  
8 sanctuary cities-

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Well, not to  
10 disband. Conversations about, you know, the future  
11 of how we police protests generally.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Sanctuary city, as we  
13 all know, New York City is a sanctuary city. Our  
14 agencies cannot cooperate with ICE. What are  
15 policies in place to ensure that this law is being  
16 fully followed by the NYPD?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Well, the main thing is we  
18 have an operations order which we put in place last  
19 January, I think, that sets forth for all officers  
20 the rules of the road and how to ensure compliance  
21 with the law.

As I mentioned, DOI conducted a very thoughtful  
and thorough review. They looked at our policies and  
our practices, and they found that our policies and  
practices comply with the law. It was, I would say,

1  
2 a positive report and I'm very proud of that. We've  
3 learned from experience in DOI's work when issues  
4 arose regarding how to process requests for  
5 information from federal law enforcement. In  
6 connection with criminal matters we put in place a  
7 new procedure so that those requests were being  
8 channeled to the right supervisors, properly assessed  
9 and documented. And as I mentioned also, DOI made  
10 several suggestions for how we could further improve  
11 and we have accepted each of them.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Final policy questions and  
13 then we'll move on to colleagues. Who have joined  
14 and have many questions about many topics. The  
15 Department of Community Safety. The mayor recently  
16 stated that funding would be included for the  
17 Department of Community Safety in the executive plan.  
18 Have you spoken to the mayor about types of cost that  
19 should be moved from the NYPD's purview to the newly  
20 created Department? Yeah, and can you talk to us  
21 about those conversions regarding that specific  
department. We've heard a lot about it, but we  
haven't heard specifics. So, wonder if you could  
provide us with some updates?

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, again, I'm not going to  
3 speak to the specifics of conversations, but I can  
4 confirm that my teams and the mayor's office have  
5 been discussing what the calls will look like.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Do you think there'll be a  
7 reduction in the NYPD's budget to fund this new  
8 department?

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No.

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Do you know when and where  
11 the NYPD will overlap with the new department when  
12 responding to a call?

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I want to take this  
14 opportunity to set some records straight. Calendar  
15 year 2024, the NYPD received over 4.3 million calls  
16 for service through 911. The total number of calls  
17 for emotionally disturbed persons of that 4.3 million  
18 was approximately 123,000. Of the 123,000, 37,000,  
19 slightly over 37,000 were calls for violent EDPs,  
20 violent people. I believe that you need to send the  
21 police when there's a call for a violent person.  
That means that the non- the total number of calls  
about non-violent emotionally disturbed persons in  
that year was 85,793.

1  
2 That is- that means that two percent of our 4.3  
3 million calls would be divertable away from the NYPD.  
4 If we are seeking to divert all calls that- for  
5 emotionally disturbed people that are nonviolent, no  
6 weapons.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you for that  
8 information. I have many more questions on many  
9 different topics including 911 operators, quality of  
10 life issues, Bronx crime, and also overtime as well,  
11 but I'll pause here. I'll pass it on to Council  
12 Member Carr for some questions.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair.  
14 Commissioner, always a pleasure to see you and your  
15 team.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Nice to see you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: And I thank you and  
18 everyone at the Department for all of their efforts  
19 each and every day of keeping our city safe. Some of  
20 the actions of our officers are heroic whether they  
21 get reported in the dailies or not, but I'm really  
grateful for all of their efforts to make New York  
City the wonderful place it is to live, work and call  
home. I want to talk a little bit about headcount.  
As you can imagine, I've long been a supporter of a

1  
2 40,000 officer headcount at the PD, and so I was  
3 dismayed when the mayor cancelled that 5,000 officer  
4 class.

5 You know, to some degree, the current headcount  
6 that you have is thanks to the accelerated hiring  
7 that took place over the prior year. So, and  
8 especially given the attrition rate that's often been  
9 reported, I think 250 to 300 per month at the  
10 Department. I'm concerned about you even maintaining  
11 that level without this hiring that was supposed to  
12 take place. Could you comment or elaborate on that  
13 for me, please?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure. I am not concerned  
15 about maintaining our headcount and staying right  
16 around our authorized headcount of 35,000 officers.  
17 Last year, we had record attrition, not because we  
18 had a record number of early retirements. This was  
19 all expected because 20 years prior we had- we had  
20 hired a huge number of new officers.

21 So, the number of officers that were newly  
eligible for retirement was much higher than it had  
been in years past. We knew that. We expected that.  
Our attrition reflected exactly what we had  
projected. Despite the higher than usual number of-

1 attrition numbers in the Department, we ended last  
2 year with 800 more people than we have had over- on  
3 average over the last three years. Hiring is  
4 something you can do if you care about it, if it is a  
5 priority, and if you manage to do it. We made a  
6 number of changes last year that were thoughtful and  
7 that really opened up the pipeline for us. One was  
8 decreasing the college credit requirements while also  
9 increasing our physical standards, offering the  
10 police test every month rather than only  
11 periodically, making that exam free, and also  
12 leveraging our wonderful fraternal organizations in  
13 this department to work alongside our Personnel  
14 Bureau to lead our recruitment efforts. If you care  
15 about hiring, you can hire.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I appreciate that answer,  
15 particularly. I thought the use of the fraternal  
16 organizations was a really smart move by the  
17 Department.

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: You know, but one of the  
19 things that, you know, I hear from folks on Staten  
20 Island, the borough that I primarily represent, is  
21 that we need more officers. Our District Attorney,

1  
2 Michael McMahon has said that, you know, I think  
3 there's been a drop in the last four years, 19  
4 percent in terms of deployment compared to 2021. You  
5 know, since we are near a budgeted headcount, do you  
6 think that there's more opportunity to bring more  
officers to patrol borough of Staten Island?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I'm not going to comment now  
8 on specific numbers of officers in specific boroughs  
9 other than to say that as we have- as each class  
10 graduates and becomes available to be assigned to  
11 precincts, our Chief of Department along with our  
12 Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives does an  
13 analysis of the force figures in every bureau in the  
Department and decides where those resources should  
most appropriately go.

14 I'm happy to have conversations with you if you  
15 have concerns about our general staffing, though, in  
16 Staten Island. The other thing to say is that we  
17 have way more officers on patrol right now than we  
18 did in 2024. So, and that was as a result of  
19 assigning officers from administrative jobs to patrol  
commands.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Commissioner,  
21 and just count me as an ally in the support for more

1  
2 resources for the Department. I always want to make  
3 sure whether it's headcount or other areas of the  
4 NYPD's efforts, that we can always do more to help  
5 you get more.

6 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you. I always do.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Commissioner.  
8 Thank you, Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Council  
10 Member Carr. Now, we'll hear from Council Member  
11 Schulman.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you.  
13 Commissioner, first I want to say that you're doing  
14 an excellent job. I want to underscore excellent  
15 here.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: And you've been amazing  
18 in all different kinds of ways, dealing with the  
19 community directly, everything that you're doing at  
20 the Department, so- and I have said that. I've  
21 shared that with the Mayor as well. I just want you  
22 to be aware. I have two questions.

23 One is, in terms of hate crimes- and I know  
24 you're transparent and the stats and everything else,  
25 but what I'm asking for is- you know, everything goes

1  
2 down to like the lower level. So, the commanding  
3 officers, are they given a specific list of things to  
4 look for and how to categorize something as a hate  
5 crime and report it to the Hate Crimes Bureau?

6 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We're going to have Chief  
7 Arias who works in our Detective Bureau and actually  
8 oversees a number of units, including hate crimes-  
9 and I think you were a former CO of the Hate Crimes  
10 Taskforce. Yes, he's going to come up and answer  
11 your question.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sir, could we just swear you  
14 in for a second? Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
15 the whole truth and nothing but the truth and answer  
16 honestly to Council Member questions? Can you state  
17 your name for the record and go ahead? Thank you.

18 ASSISTANT CHIEF ARIAS: Andrew Arias. We provide  
19 training at every promotional class to sergeant,  
20 lieutenant and captain in order to explain the scope  
21 of a possible bias crime-

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: [interposing] Okay.

ASSISTANT CHIEF ARIAS: The policy and procedures  
as outlined in Patrol Guide 207-10, reporting of hate  
crimes.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay. So, is there any  
3 follow-up to see how they're doing once they receive  
4 that training? Because the stats are only as good as  
5 what you receive, or the transparency is only as good  
6 as what you receive.

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, can I ask you a  
8 question? Is there- if there are specific commands  
9 or precincts where you think the-

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: [interposing] I'll do-  
11 I'll come off line.

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Refresher is required,  
13 please let us know-

14 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: [interposing] Okay, I  
15 will do that.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And we're very happy to-

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: [interposing] I will do  
18 that. But I was just asking in general because I  
19 want to see if there's just a follow up. I mean, I  
20 represent, you know, a district. It's a small  
21 microcosm of what the NYPD is, but just- I'm just  
22 putting it out there.

23 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yeah, no, and it- the point  
24 is very well taken.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay.

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: When I talked about  
3 recurring training for officers, it's not just police  
4 officers-

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: [interposing] Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER TISCH: it's also sergeants and  
7 lieutenants.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And so what that time, that  
10 week block will give us is the ability to review with  
11 them things just like that. And I believe with  
12 things like that you can't do it haphazardly. It has  
13 to be done thoughtfully and systematically, and that  
14 weeklong new training initiative I think is the way  
15 to make sure that that is done thoughtfully and  
16 systematically.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay. My second  
18 question is about headcount in the sense that,  
19 obviously, you're going to deploy officers based on  
20 where the stats and everything else, but particularly  
21 in my district there's always- and this is not just  
this year. This has been going on for years in the  
previous administration as well where I'm told  
there's not enough officers to do certain things and

1  
2 all of that. So, I don't know where to take that to  
3 or how that works on a-

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] So, if you have  
5 questions about your specific district headcount, I'm  
6 happy to work with you on it off line.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay. Okay. Thank you  
8 very much, Commissioner. That's it, Chair. Thank  
9 you.

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Council  
11 Member Schulman. Also, before we move onto the next  
12 Council Member, just want to recognize our students  
13 from PS21 in the Bronx who have joined us. Thank you  
14 for joining us and welcome to the People's House.  
15 Next we'll hear from Council Member Linda Lee.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Thank you, Chair. Sorry.  
17 Sorry I was late. I'm trying to bounce around  
18 different hearings for the Prelim Budget. So, I was  
19 actually just reading this because I wanted to see if  
20 the answers were in there for my questions, but I'll  
21 just go ahead. So, thank you so much, Commissioner,  
for all the work you do. I have four precincts in my  
district and they're all amazing and we work very  
closely with them. So, thank you so much for all the  
work that you are doing at the NYPD. And I don't

1  
2 know if this was asked about the Chief Savings  
3 Officers. I know that every agency has a plan to  
4 find out where exactly some of the savings can be  
5 found. And just wanted to know who will complete the  
6 comprehensive assessment for the agency spending and  
7 has been designated as the Chief Savings officer, and  
8 what areas of spending are being looked at for  
9 savings, and what are the target reductions for FY26  
10 and 27?

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I'm very happy to  
10 introduce you personally to our brand new-  
11 newly-minited Chief Savings Officer of the New York  
12 City Police Department, our Deputy Commissioner of  
13 Management and Budget, Kristine Ryan, who spent  
14 actually the vast majority of her career at the  
15 Office of Management and Budget, and she can very  
16 ably answer any question you have on this topic. Go  
17 ahead, Kristine.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay, great.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Good morning. So,  
18 yes, I am the designated Chief Savings Officer. So,  
19 the targets that we've been given just like the other  
20 agencies, it's 1.5 percent in fiscal year 26 and 2.5  
21 percent going forward. That 1.5 percent is about a

1  
2 \$90 million reduction expectation in the current  
3 fiscal year, and \$154 in the baseline. On top of  
4 that, the expectation is that 50 percent of our  
5 civilian vacancies will be reduced and the value of  
6 that is \$46 million each year.

7 So combined, the target is 137 million in the  
8 current year, and 200 million next year, and a little  
9 hire beyond that. So, we're looking at the entire  
10 agency's budget. We really have to balance,  
11 obviously, what our operational needs are with where  
12 we can find savings, and I think one of the critical  
13 things to emphasize here are what- are the things  
14 we've already done.

15 As the Commissioner mentioned earlier, we have  
16 seen reductions in overtime which is a significant  
17 part of our budget, reducing calendar year over  
18 calendar year \$143 million which was 12.4 percent of  
19 our overtime budget, and for the first half of this  
20 fiscal year, we've seen a reduction of \$88 million  
21 over that same period last year which is 14.1 percent  
reduction.

So, we do this all the time. It's not specific  
to this specific target that was given for this  
Executive Budget or specific time period. It's

1  
2 something that I work on with my team even before I  
3 became Chief Savings Officer, to try to make sure  
4 we're utilizing our resources responsibly. It is  
5 something that within the scope of our agency,  
6 because more than 90 percent of our budget is  
7 personnel, it does become something we really need to  
8 look at what we can do safely and effectively and  
9 balancing the fiscal needs of the city with the  
10 operational needs of our Department.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: And are there areas that  
12 you've identified aside from the overtime, you know,  
13 regular underspending with- of course, the goal is  
14 not to, you know, make sure that- to make sure that  
15 the service levels stay the same. But looking at  
16 areas, have you identified any areas that are  
17 regularly underspent?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: So, we're still doing  
19 that review and we're still having those  
20 conversations with City Hall and with OMB, so we'll  
21 have more information on that as we get closer to the  
Executive Budget.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay. In the past, I know  
that NYPD utilized asset forfeiture to bolster the

1  
2 budget and what specific expenses can NYPD use asset  
3 forfeiture funding for?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: So, asset forfeiture  
5 has to be utilized for cost and expenditures tied to  
6 law enforcement. And that can be anything from  
7 investigations. It could be tied to training. It  
8 could be tied to education, travel for that training  
9 and education and equipment for law enforcement  
10 officers and law enforcement operations. And we  
11 follow very- follow strictly the federal guidelines  
12 on the usage of asset forfeiture.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay and have you looked at  
14 decreasing or eliminating any units with NYPD as a  
15 way to cost save?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Again, all those  
17 conversations are still ongoing right now.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay. And this is a  
19 question that I have been personally more and more  
20 interested in terms of the use AI technology. I  
21 actually have a colleague and friend that worked in  
Chicago PD and used- created an entire AI new system  
and platform for the Police Department in Chicago to  
help reduce overtime which actually also helped in  
terms of scheduling and planning of all the different

1  
2 precincts as well so that they were able to better  
3 plan out who was going to work in what shift. And so  
4 just wondering if that use of technology has been  
5 utilized here for the overtime as well?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: We haven't adopted  
7 anything like that yet. Obviously, any use of AI  
8 we'd want to do responsibly and thoughtfully.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Yep.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: So, I think we're  
11 looking to see what other police departments are  
12 doing, but you know, proceeding cautiously as a  
13 result.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay. I would love to have  
15 a separate conversation offline about this, because  
16 not just with PD, but I think in general there are  
17 ways to utilize it safely, whether you're talking  
18 about health care, you know, having different city  
19 agencies communicate better and share data, of course  
20 in a safe way, to just figure out how we can  
21 understand if we are actually serving New Yorkers  
effectively, right?

So, even in cases like B-HEARD and other, you  
know, mental health-related non-police response  
services, that cuts across multiple agencies. So how

1  
2 do we know if people are actually not falling through  
3 the cracks, and that we're better serving them. So,  
4 I'd be curious to have that conversation offline  
5 afterwards.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: Happy to.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: And then just really  
8 quickly, my last couple questions are around Domain  
9 Awareness System and mobility [sic]. About a decade  
10 ago in conjunction with Microsoft, the NYPD developed  
11 the Domain Awareness System. So, do sales of the  
12 system to other municipalities generate revenue for  
13 the city?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Once upon a time they did,  
15 but my understanding is that in the past several  
16 years those sales have dried up.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay. And were there any  
18 funding that the city received last year at all, or-

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] I don't believe  
20 so, but Kristine can require- can-

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: [interposing] In terms  
of revenue?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Yes.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: No.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay and does Microsoft  
3 retain information collected by the system?

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No. We own all the  
5 information.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Okay, perfect. Alright,  
7 that's it. Thank you, Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Council  
9 Member Lee-

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] But it's in -  
11 sorry, it is in Microsoft cloud, but is our instance  
12 of the cloud and we own the data. They do not.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEE: Got it. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you, Council Member.  
15 Next, we'll hear from Council Member Encarnacion and  
16 then Wong and then Brewer. And then Nurse and then  
17 Ariola.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Hello, Commissioner,  
19 good morning, still morning.

20 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Hello.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: I wanted to thank  
you for specifically addressing immigration in your  
statement. And also, you know, obviously you saw our  
Speaker, our Chair, both brought up questions in  
regards to immigration that is extremely important.

1  
2 As the Chair of the Immigration, it's important to  
3 me. And I'm happy to hear that the seven  
4 recommendations out of the DOI report will be  
5 implemented but can you tell maybe a timeline for the  
6 roll out specifically around like the policy, the  
7 stand alone policy and the trainings that were  
8 recommended?

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure. Our Deputy  
10 Commissioner for Legal Matters, Michael Gerber, will  
11 answer that question.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: Right. So, we're  
13 implementing all the recommendations and that's going  
14 to be done at some point in the second quarter of  
15 this year. And we- because we want to do it  
16 holistically, right? We want to- we're not going to  
17 do it piece meal, but by the end of the second  
18 quarter of this year, we're going to have sort of  
19 revamp the policy, incorporated all of DOI's  
20 recommendations, and then like I said, it'll be  
21 rolled out before the end of the second quarter.

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: And can you talk a  
little bit- I know that the report was favorable to  
what you were in line with, but there was one  
specific local law that was mentioned, 246, in

1  
2 regards to you all trying to get compliance with that  
3 law. Can you speak a little bit about that and the  
4 specifics?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: Right. So, there  
6 were actually two local laws that were flagged. Both  
7 really- so one is a reporting issue. Totally fair  
8 point from DOI. It didn't go to the substance of  
9 what we were doing, but how we were reporting our  
10 data. So, we're fixing that. The other issue, I  
11 think it's a fair point, but it's a little bit  
12 technical.

13 So, under city law, we have to have a separate  
14 distinct policy about the use of Department  
15 facilities by law enforcement agencies other than the  
16 NYPD. We had not developed that free-standing policy  
17 which we're in the process of doing. What I want to  
18 be clear about and the DOI report makes this clear as  
19 well. We already had in our policy, and quite  
20 clearly so, that Department facilities like all  
21 Department resources cannot be used in connection  
with civil immigration enforcement, period, full  
stop.

So, it wasn't a substantive issue, but as DOI  
pointed out, we are required to have a free-standing

1  
2 policy about the use of facilities in this regard,  
3 and we're developing that.

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And I will add, obviously  
5 we're always interested in continual improvement and  
6 we will continue to improve in this agency, but I am  
7 incredibly proud of the way that the New York City  
8 Police Department has handled itself on this issue,  
9 certainly in the face of unreasonable pressure not to  
10 comply.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Thank you for that.  
12 And I know that you spoke also in your testimony  
13 about in-service training taking place with all of  
14 the officers. Are the sanctuary city's policies a  
15 part of those training? Will they be incorporated in  
16 the trainings- [inaudible]

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Of course. And the good  
18 thing about these trainings is the issue of the day  
19 may change year to year or every two years, or for  
20 every few years, and so those trainings can be  
21 updated to reflect like the current reality.

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: And in the last 35  
seconds, I'm going to try to sneak this in. But you  
also mentioned 200 additional cops for specialized

1 units. I wanted to ask specifically about the  
2 Narcotics Unit and what the headcount is for that.

3 COMMISSIONER TISCH: About the what unit?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: The Narcotics Unit.

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay. So, I spoke about 200  
6 additional cops in the context of the borough split  
7 in the Bronx. Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, they are  
8 one- each one geographic borough but for the Police  
9 Department they're organized into two different  
patrol boroughs.

10 The Bronx is on par or exceeds one or all of  
11 those boroughs in a number of different categories.  
12 We'd look like 911 calls, crime complaints, etcetera,  
13 violence. And so I believe that it was long overdue  
14 to move the Bronx from a single patrol borough  
structure to a dual patrol borough structure.

15 So later this year, we'll be separating the Bronx  
16 into Patrol Borough Bronx North and Patrol Borough  
17 Bronx South. As part of that, the borough of the  
18 Bronx will get 200 additional officers. Many of them  
19 will be for specialty units that a patrol borough  
20 would get. So, evidence collection teams, homicide  
21 squads, narcotics,-

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: [interposing] But we  
3 don't have the breakdown of numbers there?

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Crime analysis, all of that.  
5 I'm sorry?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: But we don't have  
7 the numbers, the breakdown of numbers of exactly how  
8 many-

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] If you want the  
10 breakdown of how the 200 will be assigned, we can get  
11 that to you after.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Okay, perfect.

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Do you have that here?  
14 We'll get it to you after.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: We can get it to you  
16 after.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Perfect. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you, Council Member  
19 Encarnacion. Next, we'll hear from Council Member  
20 Wong.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you, Chair. Thank  
you, Commissioner, for coming today. Public safety  
is the first thing my constituents expect from the  
city. In the Middle Village, Maspeth, Glendale,  
Elmhurst, Regal Park, and Ridgewood, residents tell

1  
2 me they value the NYPD. They know the officers in  
3 the 104th, 110th and 112th precincts by name and they  
4 appreciate the work that is being done under  
5 difficult conditions.

6 My questions today will focus on whether the  
7 104th, 110 and 112 precincts are properly staffed  
8 from patrol to the detective squads and how NYPD and  
9 the Transportation Bureau plan to sustain proactively  
10 quality of life and Vision Zero enforcements. My  
11 first question for each of the 104th, 110 and 112  
12 precincts, can you provide the current authorized and  
13 actual uniformed headcounts?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We'll get that to you after  
15 this hearing.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you. Next  
17 issue is that we have a lot of car meet-ups in our  
18 district in which dozens of cars meet up, whether  
19 they make donuts, loud music, you know, and they  
20 travel around from district to district. They often  
21 start at the Maspeth industrial areas and they go all  
over the city.

I get these calls whether it's two in the morning  
or whether it's four in the morning, and- what is  
being done to effectively combat these issues?

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Our Chief of Department,  
3 Chief Mike LiPetri will speak to the plans for  
4 addressing car meet-ups.

5 CHIEF LIPETRI: Morning.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Morning.

7 CHIEF LIPETRI: So, as tasked to the Chief of  
8 Patrol and the borough commanders across the city,  
9 not just in Patrol Borough Queens North, we have a  
10 substantial car meet plan that is reviewed daily, and  
11 before the weekend on Friday, all the information,  
12 the intelligence that we are getting is then  
13 operationalized for deployment, not just within one  
14 precinct, but across the city.

15 We also know specific bridges that some of these  
16 car meets will then actually leave the car meet or  
17 come into a specific area, notably Queens North.  
18 Just last night, I'll give you an example. Though  
19 not a car meet, but a substantial vehicular crime  
20 happened in the 109 precinct, and within 15 minutes  
21 those individuals were driving to the Bronx. We had  
intelligence of what bridge they were going over. We  
had intelligence of where they were going to end up,  
and they were apprehended and arrested on a  
vehicular-related crime. The same intelligence and

1  
2 the same deployment is done for car meets. And just  
3 one other thing. The 311 and the 911 data that we  
4 get prior to historically is analyzed and again we  
5 are deploying to locations that we've known in the  
6 past have had those types of meetups.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you. My next- do I  
8 have time for another question? I used to serve on  
9 the School Board, Community Education Council 24, and  
10 during the last years of the de Blasio he wanted to  
11 dismiss all the school safety agents and replace them  
12 with like community patrol, and as a result of that a  
13 lot of school safety agents left.

14 And in my recent visits to schools, and I noticed  
15 that many of these vacancies have not been filled up.  
16 So, is there a policy? Is there something you would  
17 to support to hire back for the school safety agents  
18 that left before they were totally let go?

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We would gladly take them  
20 back. I'll be honest. The title of school safety  
21 agent is one that we are having difficulty recruiting  
for. We have done a lot to reorganize our school  
safety division, including putting approximately 100  
school safety agents who are working administrative  
jobs like back in schools, but that is an example of

1  
2 a title where our actual headcount is significantly  
3 under our budgeted headcount. And so we are looking  
4 at a number of different ways that we can have the  
5 same success we had with school safety agents going  
6 forward that we recently had in terms of hiring  
7 police officers, including working with DCAS to see  
8 if the test is testing the right thing, seeing if we  
9 can give the test more frequently. Just generally  
10 taking a look at how we test for, hire for, and  
11 recruit for the position of school safety agent.

12 One area that we've had a lot of success in over  
13 the past year and we worked very closely with the  
14 previous Council on this is creating this assistant  
15 school safety agent title. And we have now hired  
16 about 114 of them. And that new title will serve as  
17 a pathway into the school safety agent title.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Council  
21 Member Wong. Next, we'll hear from Council Member  
Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Thank you very  
much. You're doing a great job, but expect no less.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, the 24, the 20,  
3 Manhattan North and Central Park are great, great  
4 leaders. And thank you for answering all my letters.  
5 I write hundreds and you answer them all. And I  
6 think- I know you know you think they're nuts, but I  
7 appreciate the answer.

8 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I don't think they're nuts.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I appreciate it.

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: They're a lot.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know. Everybody gets a  
12 lot. I write 50 letters a week.

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I know.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know you know. Thank  
15 you. So, retail theft, domestic violence, and  
16 paperwork. So, on the retail theft, in one case I  
17 got Duanne Reede [sp?] to put in security and then in  
18 other cases they didn't. And so of course, it's a  
19 challenge in the place that doesn't have any  
20 security. So, I just didn't know how many resources?  
21 Is it an issue? How are we doing it?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay, we have a great story  
to tell on retail theft. Last year, we had  
significant declines in retail theft. This year,  
we're seeing even greater declines, and what we've

1  
2 done is we have completely overhauled our approach to  
3 addressing retail theft, including but not limited to  
4 actually investigating cases of retail theft.

5 We know retail theft tends to be our recidivist  
6 crime, and we are now treating it as such, and our  
7 Chief of Department, Chief LiPetri who is really let  
8 the effort to come up with this new strategy that has  
9 had such great results can tell you more about how  
10 we're doing it.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And the numbers if you  
12 can. Thank you.

13 CHIEF LIPETRI: Good morning.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Good morning.

15 CHIEF LIPETRI: So, this year, the City of New  
16 York has seen a 20 percent decrease in retail theft  
17 on top of the decrease in retail theft last year, and  
18 it really goes out to the men and women of the New  
19 York City Police Department and the investigators  
20 that now are investigating petty theft. Those  
21 complaints were never investigated. They were  
basically closed. Nothing was done with them. We've  
now tasked our detectives to investigate petty theft,  
and what we see is that the same person that might be  
stealing less than a thousand dollars at a CVS, which

1  
2 the complaint report would be closed, is also  
3 committing another petty theft in a different CVS  
4 maybe five blocks away. And when we look at the  
5 video that we get and we put it into the case and we  
6 make wanted flyers, we do connect it from that person  
7 to the same person and then look at that person and  
8 see that they are a recidivist and that they're  
9 driving retail theft.

10 And then what we've done is we've leveraged the  
11 prosecutors, not just within Manhattan but across the  
12 five boroughs to not only aggregate these crimes  
13 which means it's a- it would become a grand larceny  
14 instead of a petty larceny, but we've also had great  
15 success in our trespass affidavit program across the  
16 City of New York-

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] Right.

18 CHIEF LIPETRI: Where that person is- if they get  
19 arrested for a petty theft or actually grand larceny,  
20 they're served a trespass affidavit. If they go back  
21 into that location and commit another crime therein,  
they're then charged with a burglary. And we've had  
over 90 percent arraignment rate on the burglary  
across the city working with the prosecutors and it  
really has substantially decreased the retail theft

1  
2 across the city. I will also say, almost 50 percent  
3 of the retail theft complaints in New York City are  
4 solved with an arrest. That's incredible.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright.

6 CHIEF LIPETRI: Prior to two years ago, it was  
7 about 33 percent, and now we're closer to 50 percent.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And I would just say, retail  
10 theft fell 14 percent citywide last year, so the 20  
11 percent that he was talking about for this year is on  
12 top of a 14 percent-

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] Okay.

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Decline and that tracks to  
15 when that new plan went into effect.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright. And domestic  
17 violence, is that up, down, and how are we doing with  
18 it?

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Domestic violence is up.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And we have just done-  
completed a massive reorganization of the Department  
to address it. Domestic violence isn't just up this  
year. This has been really since-

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] But it's  
3 good in a sense people are reporting which is the  
4 other thing.

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: But it's up meaningfully  
6 since I would say the pandemic, and we have just  
7 completed a massive reorganization of the Department  
8 so that we can better address not only the crime, but  
9 improve how we deal with victims.

10 And so a lot of that reorganization has been  
11 about one, improving the quality and the focus on DV  
12 investigations; two, doing a better job of hunting  
13 down DV perps; and three, is making sure that if you  
14 are a victim of domestic violence, you are not  
15 getting outreach from multiple different officers all  
16 asking you the same information, that we streamline  
17 who talks to victims and about what.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And it's making a  
19 difference, you think, in terms of numbers or how is  
20 it going to impact-

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] I think-

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] Or it's too  
soon to know?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: I think that it will make a  
difference. I think it already has made a difference

1  
2 in terms of the way we treat victims. We are now  
3 taking a victim-centered approach to domestic  
4 violence. Whether to the extent that it will bring  
5 DV numbers down, I don't know. What I can tell you  
6 is those cases will be investigated in a more  
streamlined and effective and victim-centered way.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Thank you. And  
8 then finally just paperwork. I know- I mean, can you  
9 help- we know that there's still a lot. Is it  
10 changing? I know we've talked about this in the  
past. If you-

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] So, there's a  
12 lot of paperwork.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: There is.

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: There is too much paperwork.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I actually find like the  
17 paperwork issue in the past has gotten politicized.  
18 Like, this is not a political statement. There's too  
19 much paperwork that the NYPD has to do, and I would  
20 love to work with this Council on streamlining it if  
the Council is open to it, both the paperwork and the  
21 general reporting requirements on this Department.  
Just requires a lot of resources to meet.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, there's reporting and  
3 then there's if I have a broken window in my car-  
4 which I don't have a car, but if I had one then I go  
5 to the precinct. Is that still a paper-mandated  
6 report or is that online?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Well, any crime- any crime  
8 com- when I say paperwork, I don't mean crime-

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] There's two  
10 kinds. Yeah, there's the reporting and then there's  
11 the paperwork that we citizens have to fill out when  
12 we have a crime situation and that the officers have  
13 to fill out.

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, we have digitized a  
15 number of the forms that our officers have to fill  
16 out. The- over the past I don't know, seven years,  
17 there are some that are still done on paper.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And can you get us  
19 a list of those? Or I'm not asking for more  
20 reporting. I do think that when you finish your  
21 tour, because we did go out with some tours, there's  
still a lot of paperwork to be done. Can- and that  
perhaps could also be streamlined. And maybe we can  
help you do that. If there's too much reporting  
there.

1  
2 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I agree. I'm going to look  
3 forward to it. Thank you very much Council Member.

4 CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very much,  
5 Commissioner.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And thank you, Council Member  
7 Brewer. Next we'll hear from Council Member Nurse  
8 and then from Majority Leader Shaun Breau. I also  
9 want to recognize that we've been joined by Council  
10 Member Justin Sanchez and Avilés.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair. Good  
12 morning, Commissioner. I just have three questions.  
13 You've done some outreach recently about police  
14 communications technicians. It looks like their  
15 starting salary is from \$42-\$49,000 per year, and I  
16 think- it's been communicated to me that very  
17 experienced folks are about \$60,000 per year. Has  
18 there been any effort to bring that salary up?

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, unfortunately, the  
20 salaries for all of these positions are not really  
21 set by the agency. They are set through collective  
bargaining agreements that are largely led by the  
Office of Labor Relations. However, we have worked  
very closely with the union and Henry to do things to  
try to make the position more financially appealing

1  
2 to applicants including how we administer this bonus  
3 that was put in a few years ago to make it so that  
4 more people are eligible for it, so it becomes a part  
5 of the general salary.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah. And some of the  
7 concerns were because of the low salary, high  
8 turnover- and I understand you're not directly in  
9 charge of it, but I'm putting it out here for the  
10 public. Low wages, high turnover, people are saying  
11 they're frequently mandated to do 16-hour shifts very  
12 often.

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Less than- too much, but  
14 less and less. So what was going on at 911 was that  
15 it basically wasn't managed as far as I can tell.  
16 What I saw when I came in a year ago and looked at it  
17 was an unacceptably high number of call-taking  
18 delays, not because the police communications  
19 technicians weren't doing their job, but because  
20 their managers weren't allocating the staffing based  
21 on when calls come in. You know what time of day the  
most calls come in, and that's when our staffing was  
the lowest.

And so there were a number of things that we were  
able to do working with the union on, you know,

1  
2 12-hours, 10-hour tours, 8-hour tours, making sure we  
3 had the right number of squads working at the right  
4 time to not only improve our service to the public,  
5 but to I would say meaningfully bring down some of  
6 the forced overtime. But there still is quite a fair  
amount of it.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Fair enough. And then-  
8 just you had a lot in your testimony about  
9 international incidents. How many NYPD personnel are  
10 deployed outside the United States, and do you have a  
cost of that international-

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] so, it's 12  
12 countries, and the New York City Police Foundation  
13 picks up the cost associated with it, everything  
except, of course, the officer's salary.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And what is that budget?

15 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The-

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] The budget  
17 of the cost of personnel overseas that is carried by  
the-

18 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Oh, for the 12  
19 officers?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Yeah, so the portion  
21 that the foundation pays for is \$1.26 million a year.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And sorry, you're saying  
3 12 countries-

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] The salary-

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] Is that 12  
6 officers?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes, yes. And so it would  
8 be the-

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: It's 12 salaries.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And then for the Q  
11 Team, what- just two more questions. How has the  
12 NYPD's role changed in relationship to the new  
13 encampment policy that was announced, and how does  
14 the Q Team fit within that, given that at least what  
15 it's reported is they do some work related to  
16 encampment?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, under the Adams  
18 Administration, the New York City Police Department,  
19 I would say- it's fair to say, the Mayor's Office  
20 with the NYPD is the lead agency. It was like the  
21 lead among the three different agencies involved.  
That would be NYPD, DHS, and Sanitation. And what  
that would mean is when the complaint would come in,  
we would be the first to respond, and then only later  
go jointly with the other three agencies. This new

1  
2 administration is- has made a policy decision that  
3 the NYPD should not be the first agency to respond,  
4 but instead that should be the Department of Homeless  
5 Services, and so that's the main change in how this  
6 administration responds to homeless encampment  
7 issues.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And what are the  
9 top complaints from the Q Team? What are your top  
10 three complaints that you're constantly responding  
11 to?

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Oh, we have it here, but I  
13 can probably do it off the top of my head. Yep.  
14 Illegal parking, residential noise, street sidewalk  
15 noise, and blocked driveway.

16 Then abandoned vehicle. Then encampments. But  
17 like to give you a sense, illegal parking last year  
18 was 577,000. Residential noise was 463,000. Blocked  
19 driveway was 172,000. Abandoned vehicles, which  
20 we've made a lot of progress on since our Sanitation  
21 days working on it, is almost 68,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And last question. What  
is a normal tenure of a precinct commander?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Oh, Chief LiPetri can answer  
that. He has a lot of thoughts about it.

1  
2 CHIEF LIPETRI: So, since I became Chief of  
3 Department in October, I have asked the Chief of  
4 Patrol to really try and limit to have less than two  
5 years as a precinct commander. There are  
6 case-to-case- there are cases that the commander  
7 might be there less than two years, but we really  
8 want that two years obviously for the community, for  
9 the officers, and also you know, the experience.

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, at least two years.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: At least two. Yeah, I  
12 feel like- and I'll just- I mean, I don't have  
13 problems with my commanders, but at the 83rd I feel  
14 like we've just had a string of turnover. I think  
15 I've had four in my four years and three months I've  
16 been here, and think that's a little bit of a  
17 problem, so what do you-

18 CHIEF LIPETRI: [interposing] I can-

19 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] How do you  
20 all look into when you're seeing these high rates of  
21 turnover? What is your institutional response to  
looking and examining a precinct or the policies  
that, you know- a promotion and things like that-that  
might be pulling people out of these roles?

1  
2           COMMISSIONER TISCH: The Chief can speak to the  
3 specifics of it, but I think that you both are going  
4 to be quite aligned on this, because when the Chief  
5 was named Chief of Department, he really took a  
6 leadership role. He decides who the precinct  
7 commanders are, and one of the things he called out  
8 immediately was this issue of turnover. People are  
9 not staying in their commands long enough. It's not  
10 good for the community. It's not good for the cops,  
11 and frankly it's not good for the individual.

12           So, that is something that the Chief also  
13 identified and that I think has been addressed since  
14 he now approves any precinct commander that enters or  
15 exits. Do you have anything to add to that, Chief?

16           CHIEF LIPETRI: No, ma'am.

17           COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Well, it would be good to  
18 maybe an- I'm done, Chair, but if you could outline  
19 it here or send us some- how has it been addressed  
20 other than you might not approve it, but what are  
21 some of the outcomes or analysis that you had when  
reviewing that?

          COMMISSIONER TISCH: Well, I don't really- I'd  
like to get you any information that you want, but I

1  
2 would say that most of it, all of it, was how it was  
3 managed, right?

4 People moving into different roles, especially  
5 leadership roles in the Department like overtime is a  
6 very basic management function of an organization,  
7 and so how long someone was serving as a precinct  
8 commander wasn't something that was managed to or  
9 against.

10 And so like other things in the Department, it  
11 got out of control. And now, we've set very clear  
12 standards. Like, for example, like we want people to  
13 be precinct commanders for at least two years. There  
14 are certain commands that are only a second command  
15 or a third command, and we're actually sticking to  
16 those things and managing against them.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair. Thank  
18 you.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Next we'll  
20 hear from Council Member Alexa Avilés.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Pleasant surprise. I  
thought I was much further in the queue. Thank you,  
Chair. Thank you everyone for being here. I guess I  
wanted to start with if you could provide for me,  
obviously not here, but just to make the request for-

1  
2 I cover the 72nd, 76, 78, 66, and one other that I'm  
3 forgetting and I'm sorry. The number of authorized  
4 and uniformed officers-

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] We will do  
6 that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: For those precincts. And  
8 I have to congratulate two officers who delivered a  
9 baby the other day in the 72nd precinct.

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Happens more than you think.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] A gift. A  
12 gift-

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] They're  
14 amazing.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: To our community.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We should always remember  
17 that. They're a gift to our communities.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: For- to shift over to the  
19 topic of immigration. I just want to flag for the  
20 Department, and thank you for the meetings that we  
21 have had over a certainly the year, this past year.  
There is still an outstanding communication that I'm  
waiting for a response to, a letter that I submitted  
in August, and re-upped. So, just waiting for those  
responses.

1  
2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: Sure. Though I will  
3 point out that I believe that subsequent to that  
4 meeting we actually met, myself, the Police  
5 Commissioner, you, other members of the Council.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yes.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: And then Speaker.  
8 We actually sat with you and answered every question  
9 you had on the subject of immigration.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, I think there's a  
11 little confusion around the timing of that. We did  
12 seat- we sat together. We had productive meetings.  
13 This was questions that suffered- weird freudian  
14 slip, questions that emerged from that meeting that  
15 we sent after.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We will make sure to get  
17 back to you on-

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: [interposing] So, I just  
19 want to flag.

20 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I apologize that if we have  
21 outstanding correspondence, my office will circle  
back with yours to make sure we're responding to the  
correct questions and get you those answers.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah. I'm not Gale  
3 Brewer. Council Member gets a response immediately  
4 from every agency in New York City. No, I'm teasing.

5 In terms of immigration, I think one of the  
6 questions that I really would love to hear for the  
7 record and certainly would love to hear you,  
8 Commissioner, provide a directive is are there any  
9 circumstances under which NYPD would be wearing any  
10 other uniform besides its NYPD uniform?

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Fewer and fewer. Obviously,  
12 the vast majority of the Police Department wears the  
13 blue pants, blue shirt. Well, wears the standard  
14 uniform of the day. We obviously have certain units  
15 that work plain clothes and that have to work plain  
16 clothes based on what their assignments are. But one  
17 of the things that we're doing is to the extent  
18 possible, to the extent the work allows for it, we  
19 are trying to- we are getting units to standardize  
20 uniforms.

21 So, one great example is our CRT Unit used to  
wear a special khaki pants. They no longer wear  
their special khaki pants. They now wear blue pants.  
And so we're trying to get as many officers and units

1  
2 as possible where the work allows for it to wear the  
3 standard uniform.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So, I understand the  
5 plain clothes units. Are there any circumstances  
6 where NYPD would be wearing vests that say just  
7 police, just HSI?

8 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No, we would never wear HSI  
9 vests, and we would never wear- I don't think vests  
10 that just say police.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Generic?

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Chief, do you know? Can you  
13 think of anything?

14 CHIEF LIPETRI: I cannot think of an outer NYPD  
15 vest that just says police.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And Chief, just to confirm,  
18 NYPD would not wear HSI vests? We'd wear NYPD vests?

19 CHIEF LIPETRI: Absolutely not.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And that would be for any  
21 other agency other than-

COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: They would never have DEA  
or some other agency's-

COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] No.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Anything on them? Okay.

2 CHIEF LIPETRI: That is correct.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: In terms of- just to wrap  
4 up this particular question, I think- my  
5 understanding is the policy is when residents ask  
6 police officers for their name and badge on an  
7 interaction, that officers are supposed to respond to  
8 them. Is that correct?

9 CHIEF LIPETRI: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay.

11 CHIEF LIPETRI: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Because we have seen-  
13 I've several instances and I will send it to your  
14 office where officers were asked and this in the  
15 context of also people thinking they were  
16 immigration. So, asking them to identify themselves  
17 because they're wearing plain clothes but with  
18 obviously hanging badges, and got in a car and left.

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, if you let us know-  
20 certainly, lots of people report those types of  
21 violations to CCRB, but you're also welcome to send  
it to us if you'd like some training and  
reinstruction.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, yeah. So, I think-

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COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] But that is a violation of Department policy.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you. Thank you. That's what I understood, and obviously my constituents understand that as well, and we're very dismayed that- also an instance of like shoving, just pushing people and- so I will follow up with you.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: I think I'm out of time, but thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Council Member Avilés, and we'll have a second round of questions as well. And just to follow up on that issue, is that a Department policy or is that city law?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: About?

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: The rule requiring that they identify themselves, provide a badge number?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Go ahead, Michael.

CHIEF LIPETRI: It is an NYPD policy as far as providing your shield number and your name. I do not know if it's a city-

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GERBER: [interposing] And it's certainly a city law. For example, obstruct your name and badge number, there's actually a city

1  
2 law that speaks to that. Separate and apart from the  
3 business card issue, there's a city law that speaks  
4 to the fact that NYPD officers are not permitted to  
5 obstruct their badge number.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Thanks for that  
7 information. So, I have a few more questions. Want  
8 to go back to the topic of headcount and overtime,  
9 but actually before that we'll go back to the  
10 policy-related questions. Want to go back to the  
11 topic of the Department of Community Safety.  
12 Anything that you can share on that? I mean, we've  
13 heard a lot about that specific title, but other than  
14 the title, we've heard very little to no specifics?  
15 Is there any information that you could share about  
16 how this Department can potentially work?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I would generally refer you  
18 to the Mayor's Office. And just add the numbers  
19 that I provided previously, which is in New York City  
20 in calendar year 2024 we had about 4.3 million 911  
21 calls for service at the NYPD.

Of those, 85,793 were non-violent calls for  
people in mental health crisis, i.e., they would be  
eligible for today's B-HEARD program. That means  
that roughly two percent of the 911 calls for service

1  
2 today would be eligible for non-police response under  
3 the B-HEARD program as it exists.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: The final question on the  
5 issue of policy, this one is about sound decibels.  
6 Many of us have started having conversations about  
7 how loud emergency vehicles can be, not only police  
8 cars, but also, you know, fire trucks. V I mean, they  
9 should be loud, but a big question is how loud should  
10 they be so that they could accomplish their goal of  
11 notifying people around them.

12 I mean, as we know, excessive siren noise  
13 decreases quality of life, increases stress, anxiety,  
14 but also it could be ineffective. If people from our  
15 community hear the same exact noise every three  
16 seconds, it's going to be ineffective.

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] That's where  
18 all my stress and anxiety comes from. I wasn't able  
19 to place it. Thank you. We are very happy to look  
20 at that issue with you. I, obviously, have been  
21 tracking the issue for the past several years as it  
relates to the Fire Department, and I know that  
Council Member Brewer led efforts there, but happy to  
talk to you about it.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right. And based on the  
3 research they've done and everything they- all the  
4 conversations you've had, NYPD has- is it 120  
5 decibels?

6 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We're happy to have follow  
7 up meetings and provide you all the information you  
8 need, but I don't have our decibel level here.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And final question on policy.  
10 One of my former colleagues, now Senator Eric  
11 Bottcher, introduced a bill that would require social  
12 workers in police precincts. Do you think this would  
13 be a good idea, at least in the precincts that have  
14 the highest amount of mental health issues, and  
15 youth-related challenges?

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No, we are- actually as a  
17 department we do have programs that involve social  
18 workers, in particular our call response work that  
19 our- Alex Crohn, our Deputy Commissioner of Strategic  
20 Initiatives can tell you about.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: Yeah. So we pair  
22 NYPD police officers with clinicians from DOHMH.  
23 The's about 16 officers that are assigned to that  
24 unit, and they respond not to 911 calls, but rather  
25 visit people they know are most in need of services.

1  
2 So, they do identify the people with most severe  
3 mental illness who might need services. So, that  
4 exists already. And of course, in the precincts we  
5 do have the crime victim advocates who are able to  
6 provide crime victim services. So we do a lot of  
7 this work already.

8 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright, sounds good. And on  
9 the siren issues, decibel issue, look forward to  
10 continuing that conversation. I actually moved to  
11 another side of my building. It's next to a road,  
12 and yeah, during the day we cannot open the window  
13 because every three seconds it's a firetruck, an  
14 ambulance, and etcetera, and of course we need to  
15 make sure that people are notified.

16 But the big question is how much noise is needed.  
17 The next question is whether if members of our  
18 community hear the same exact noise every three  
19 seconds, whether they even process the noise once  
20 they hear it again.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Understood.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And therefore making it  
ineffective.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: I just know that fire truck  
and ambulance is not the NYPD, but no-

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right, yeah, of course, yeah.

3 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And I'm going to look  
4 forward to it.

5 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright, sounds good. Going  
6 back to the headcount topic and forced overtime, and  
7 also recruitment and retention. Based on the  
8 conversations you've had, I know you mentioned the  
9 union and the officers are in the best position to  
10 answer to this. But based on the conversations that  
11 you've had and the information that you gained, what  
12 are the top reasons that police officers usually  
13 leave the force?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Leave the force, do we have  
15 that data here? I'm not sure we have here right now  
16 the exit interview reasons for leaving. I can tell  
17 you that less one percent of our uniformed members  
18 leave for other Police Departments annually.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Less than one person for  
20 other Police Departments. How many police officers  
21 have left the Department and how many have we gained?  
Can you provide data for the last three years?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: I think we did this one  
already, but I'm happy to redo it. Hold on.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And also, how many  
3 separations have been due to retirement versus other  
4 reasons?

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yeah. I have that in here.  
6 Let me just find it. Okay. Separations from  
7 officers retiring compared to officers leaving the  
8 force before retirement, that's what you want to  
9 know?

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Historically 10 percent of  
12 our class hires will leave by their first year of  
13 service, 30 percent by their fifth year of service,  
14 70 percent by their 20th year of service, and 90  
15 percent by their 25th year of service.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Nice data. How many police  
17 officers have left the Department, though, and how  
18 many have we gained? Can you provide actual numbers  
19 for the last three years?

20 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay. In- I can give you  
21 the net numbers. So, in calendar year '25, we added-  
we were net up. We added 758 officers. In calendar  
year '24 we added 12 officers, and in calendar year  
'23 we lost 280 officers.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Good job with the  
3 hiring and the-

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Thank you.  
5 Thank you. We really tried very hard.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And talk to us about their  
7 tenure. How long- actually, no you already provided  
8 information that kind of answers that. This is all  
9 public info, but still to good have this on the  
10 record. Talk to us about the salary of police  
11 officers. What's the starting salary?

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Starting- yeah. Starting  
13 salary is \$55,942, and after a year and a half it  
14 goes up to \$57,976, with increases each year reaching  
15 \$109,352 after five and a half years.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And what's the average salary  
17 considering the 300 hours that they generally do in  
18 overtime. Would you say we add an additional like  
19 \$30,000 to that starting salary?

20 COMMISSIONER TISCH: For calendar year 2025 on  
21 average officers earned approximately \$26,000  
overtime per year. So with an average salary of  
\$103,000, that would total \$129,000.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Talk to us about the police  
response time for different crimes. vWhat's the

1  
2 average response for shootings, homicides, domestic  
3 violence, assaults, and anything else that-

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Okay. We track  
5 two different things, crimes in progress meaning a  
6 robbery that's in- well, crimes in progress and then  
7 serious crimes in progress.

8 So, for the first four months of fiscal year  
9 2026, response times for serious crimes in progress,  
10 which is many of the ones you're talking about, are  
11 down 48 seconds, and response times for all crimes in  
12 progress are down six seconds. But the crimes that  
13 you are- said, were mostly the serious crimes in  
14 progress. So that's down 48.

15 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Going back to the  
16 overtime issue. How much of a role does headcount  
17 play on the issue of overtime? I know you mentioned  
18 generally it's a few hours of overtime. They have to  
19 do paperwork or finalize their day. How much does  
20 headcount, though, play a role on that issue?

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Less of a role than you  
think. So, let's talk about one area where we  
really- we often need overtime and that is for like a  
detail or a big event, or a parade. That parade and  
that- doesn't happen every single day. So you don't

1  
2 need to hire an extra officer to work every day for a  
3 parade that's going to happen like once a month or a  
4 few times a month, etcetera. So, there- it is  
5 related, but not directly correlated.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. I'll pause now. I'll  
7 call Council Member Hanks who was with us earlier  
8 today. Had to leave for a hearing that she had  
9 across the street. Council Member Hanks, the floor  
10 is yours.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Good afternoon.

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Good afternoon.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you. First, I want  
14 to thank Commissioner Tisch and the team here for  
15 your thorough and informative testimony this morning.  
16 I want to thank you and the members of NYPD for their  
17 service and truly the important job that they do in  
18 helping keep New Yorkers safe. So, I wanted to- I  
19 have questions in a few spaces, apologies, because I  
20 didn't think I was going to get called on that fast.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: That's the theme today.

COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Really quickly on the  
uniform headcount reduction. I know this has been  
talked about for most of the hearing. But  
specifically with Staten Island, how many uniform

1  
2 officers are assigned to Staten Island today versus  
3 prior years, and will Staten Island lose officers  
4 under the 300 position reduction plan?

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No. There are no plans for  
6 Staten Island to lose any officers, and we will  
7 provide the staffing numbers for Staten Island to you  
8 right after this hearing.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you very much. So,  
10 circling over to the Neighborhood Safety Teams. The  
11 Department has heightened police presence in city  
12 streets and subway stations citywide and deployed  
13 precinct-based Neighborhood Safety Teams and  
14 borough-wide Community Response Teams. What is the  
15 current budget of the Neighborhood Safety Teams?

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Kristine, do you have the  
17 budget of that? So, the Neighborhood Safety Teams  
18 are part of our patrol services bureau, and so  
19 unfortunately we don't have here the budgeted- the  
20 dollar value of what that costs. Do you have  
21 anything?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: We do have the number  
of officers, however, in the Neighborhood Safety Team  
is 356.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: And do you have it for CRT?

1  
2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: For CRT, 173.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you so much. What  
4 are the matrix of success in the Neighborhood Safety  
5 Teams? This is going to go into the training that  
6 you were talking about for your officers as well?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure. The Neighborhood  
8 Safety Teams go after gun violence. Chief LiPetri,  
9 do you want to speak a little bit more to the noble  
10 and heroic work that NST does?

11 CHIEF LIPETRI: Sure. So, we have our  
12 Neighborhood Safety Teams deployed in approximately  
13 35 of the most violent precincts across New York  
14 City, including all eight patrol boroughs that have a  
15 Neighborhood Safety Team. The Police Commissioner  
16 described it outstanding in that violent crime and  
17 gun violence are their number one focus, and with  
18 substantial and historic reduction in shootings last  
19 year, obviously the success has been absolutely  
20 outstanding.

21 They are vetted extremely detailed. We ask for a  
three-year, at least three years of service to the  
City of New York. We also ask them and really look  
at what they've done as the whole body of work, and I  
cannot be more proud of the Neighborhood Safety Team

1  
2 on number one, the success, but number two, on the  
3 integrity and the way they're all going about their  
4 business every single day.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you. That is what  
6 we're seeing on Staten Island. Chair, may I ask one  
7 more please? Thank you. Thank you.

8 So, in relationship to that, Commissioner, you  
9 testified for the first time officers will  
10 participate in regular focused week-long service  
11 training built around real world performance. I  
12 can't tell you how excited I am to hear that. So, my  
13 questions are two-part.

14 One, has the department given any thought to how  
15 this training can be mirrored in our crisis  
16 management groups throughout the city, and as part of  
17 our Neighborhood Safety Team, what is the community  
18 engagement efforts. So it's Kind of like the same  
19 question but I was very much impressed with the  
20 training component, but I also believe that the  
21 crisis management teams that are in- throughout New  
York City also need to understand and maybe perhaps  
do you have any intentions on mirroring or at least  
educating our community safety teams on the new  
training aspects, or have they informed them?

1  
2           COMMISSIONER TISCH: Sure. You know, we're  
3 always happy to work with the Crisis Management  
4 system, and if there's ever a training that we can  
5 provide them that will help facilitate their work, we  
6 stand ready to do it. Our Community Affairs Bureau  
7 really takes the lead on those interactions.

8           As for the week-long recurring training that  
9 we're going to do and the curriculum. A lot of it is  
10 going to be very specifically focused on the roles  
11 and duties of police officers. So I'm not sure that  
12 all of it would be transferable or useful for the  
13 crisis management system, but Alex can walk you  
14 through what that will entail.

15           DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CROHN: Yeah, so the  
16 Commissioner is exactly right. The training will  
17 really be focused on a lot of the day-to-day  
18 situations that our officers find ourselves in that  
19 may have been trained in the academy when there were  
20 recruits, but then got, oh, 10-15 years and there's  
21 no chance for a refresher.

          So, you know, things like defensive tactics or  
de-escalation obviously, compliance with the law  
whether it's statutory or constitutional. So it'll  
be very policing focused. So probably not terribly

1  
2 applicable to the providers in the crisis management  
3 system, but obviously, you know, there is  
4 communication with them, you know, to help them  
5 understand where areas might be useful for them to  
6 deploy. So, that will of course continue.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Oh, I look forward to  
8 working with you on that. Thank you so much, and  
9 before I go, I just want to give a special shout out  
10 to my sister First Deputy Kinsella from Staten  
11 Island. Thank you all. Thank you all.

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And from the Bronx too,  
14 right?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: But now she's from Staten  
16 Island.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. So we have a very  
18 lengthy schedule and agenda today. We'e going to  
19 hear later today from the District Attorneys, CCRB,  
20 MOCJ, so I'll move on to some new topics, and I will  
21 do a brief second round of questions. I want to ask  
about general civilian positions and then talk about  
the Bronx in general.

Civilian positions, they obviously include school  
crossing guards, school safety agents, 911 operators.

1  
2 I want to start with the school safety agent issue.  
3 Even before I ask some questions, it seems like we  
4 have a real problem with our school safety agent  
5 headcount. I've received many videos from parents,  
6 from students, from school principals, sending videos  
7 of long lines around the schools, basically students  
8 that make it 30 or 45 min late to class because they  
9 have to wait that long, because there's not enough  
10 school safety agents to staff the scanning equipment.  
11 Making it 30 to 45 minutes late due to issues related  
12 to your system.

13 So, talk to us about that issue. Is headcount a  
14 problem? Do you need additional funding? What's the  
15 budgeted headcount and how many- what's the actual  
16 headcount?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: 4,065 is the budgeted  
18 headcount for school safety agents, assistant school  
19 agencies and supervisors, excluding supervisors, the  
20 budget headcount is 3,915.

21 Right now, we have 476 vacancies in this school  
safety agent title which is about 12 percent. Last  
year, working with the Council we established the new  
assistant school safety agent title with a starting  
salary of just over \$37,000 to attract younger

1  
2 candidates earlier and establish a clear promotional  
3 pathway to full school safety agent status in order  
4 to broaden and stabilize the recruitment pool. We've  
5 hired over 100 of them which we're really pleased  
6 about. We are also currently assessing all of SSA  
7 hiring requirements to ensure that they align with  
8 the positions and our recruitment needs.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay and I know on the issue  
10 of school safety agents, there's a lot of different  
11 perspectives on it, on the need. And in that school  
12 that I mentioned specifically, I'm not going to  
13 question the need for school safety agents. That's  
14 a region of the Bronx that has had safety issues.  
15 So, if principals are mentioning, I'm not going to  
16 question their judgement. But on that topic, how do  
17 we usually decide if a school gets school safety  
18 agents?

19 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We deploy one to every  
20 school, at least one to every school, and then the  
21 First Deputy Commissioner oversees school safety now.  
That's a big organizational change we made moving it  
out of community affairs where it wasn't getting the  
attention that it needed and deserved, and so the  
First Deputy Commissioner along with the new fabulous

1  
2 commanding officer of the School Safety Division,  
3 Chief Mary King, they'll make the decision where the  
4 others- which schools get multiple and how many. I  
5 would say one of the things that we've done is we've  
6 taken- there were a huge number, over 100 school  
7 safety agents who were working surely administrative  
8 jobs, meaning they weren't in schools.

9 And so one of the things that we've done that has  
10 really I think meaningfully contributed to the  
11 success we've seen in terms of enforcement at schools  
12 going down and violence at schools also going down is  
13 getting school safety agents out of administrative  
14 jobs and into the schools as well as the renewed  
15 executive attention on it.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: So, the budgeted headcount is  
17 4,065. There's about 12 percent vacancy. Do you  
18 think we need- based on the conversations that you've  
19 had with your team, but also everything we've heard  
20 from school principals and parents and etcetera, do  
21 you think we need to increase the headcount on this?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: No.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Or is that enough?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: I would never- I should slow  
that down a little bit. I would never ask to

1  
2 increase a headcount when the Department hasn't even  
3 shown an ability to achieve its budgeted headcount.

4 I think the times to have conversations about  
5 increasing the school safety agent budgeted headcount  
6 is when we get much closer to the current authorized  
7 headcount.

8 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And what are initiatives that  
9 we have in place to increase that headcount?

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: As I mentioned before, we  
11 have this new assistant school safety agent title  
12 which is really going to be for younger people and  
13 will serve as a pathway into the full SSA title.  
14 We're also doing some work with DCAS to make sure  
15 that the requirements of the title align with what  
16 is- what the actual job function is, meaning does the  
17 test meet the reality and the- are the requirements  
18 still all current.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Is retention an issue for  
20 these school safety agents, and if yes, what are we  
21 doing about it?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: If we hire and lose-

COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] My  
understanding is that retention is an issue for

1  
2 school safety agents. The monthly average attrition  
3 in that title in the fiscal year has been 37.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: And what exactly are we doing  
5 to retain the people that we have. You have hiring  
6 initiatives, but if we're losing them, we're not  
7 gaining, or we gaining and losing, then we'll- we're  
8 never going to make progress. So, what steps are we  
9 taking to hopefully keep-

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] I'm going to  
11 ask our great First Deputy Commissioner to answer  
12 that question since school safety reports up to her.  
13 And First Dep, the question is about what do we do to  
14 retain as much as possible school safety agents?

15 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER KINSELLA: So, we try  
16 to retain them as much as possible. We've been  
17 working with DCAS, like the Police Commissioner said,  
18 to increase the amount exams given. So, normally  
19 it's two. So now we give it to four- we give it four  
20 times.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I think the question is- the  
school safety agents that are currently employed by  
us, how are we- what are we doing for them to retain  
them? Like, I know we make every effort, for  
example, to place them in a school by their home.

1  
2 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER KINSELLA: Yes, we  
3 place them by their homes. We also make sure that,  
4 you know, the assistant school safety agents, it  
5 fills in the elementary schools. So that leaves a  
6 passageway for them to turn into school safety  
7 agents.

8 So, to become an assistant school safety agent,  
9 you have to be 18 years of age. So, by the time they  
10 hit 21 years of age, they can too be- it's a pathway  
11 into becoming a school safety agent.

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Thank you.

13 FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER KINSELLA: That's how  
14 we attempt to retain them as well. And we lose a  
15 good bit of our school safety agents to becoming  
16 police officers as well. And we do voluntary  
17 overtime if, you know, we need to. It's a need-to  
18 basis. That's how we help to retain them financially  
19 as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Same questions for  
21 911 operators. How's the headcount? What's the  
22 budgeted headcount? What's the actual headcount?  
23 How's retention? Last preliminary hearing advocates  
24 testified that there was a shortage.

25 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yep.

1 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Due to burnout.

2  
3 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We made significant  
4 progress, as I've mentioned in 911. I'm just looking  
5 for the actual numbers. Here we go. Our budgeted  
6 headcount for police communications technicians is  
7 1,412 and we are shy of that by about 125, although  
8 we plan to put in a new class soon, I think in a  
9 month or two. So, we plan to hire about 100 new  
10 PCT's in June, which will get us right up to that  
11 budgeted headcount which is fantastic.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What's the starting salary  
13 for 911 operators? Is retention an issue?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Starting salary is \$45,703  
15 and it rises to \$47,222 after one year. Top pay is  
16 \$61,883, which you can achieve after three years. We  
17 have been in conversations with the Office of Labor  
18 Relations to try to increase the salary during the  
19 next contract negotiation.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Same questions for  
21 school crossing guards. That's one issue that I'm  
consistently hearing about any time I visit a  
Community Board, members of the community are saying  
that they've been requesting for years a school  
crossing guard due to traffic safety issues around

1  
2 their elementary schools. So, just wondering about  
3 staffing, what's the actual headcount? How's  
4 retention, and what are issues that we're having with  
5 hiring? And before you answer, I just want to  
6 recognize the Riverdale Country Day School who has  
7 joined us. Thank you and welcome to the- to City  
8 Hall.

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Alright, we're doing well  
10 with school crossing guards. As of March 1st, we  
11 employed 2,123 school crossing guard level one's,  
12 which is less than 100 below our budgeted headcount  
13 of 2,219. And for the level two's, we're at 78,  
14 which is 12 below the budgeted headcount of 90.  
15 We're doing very nicely with school crossing guards.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Moving onto the  
17 questions related to the Bronx and also the new Bronx  
18 Patrol Borough South. So, you mentioned there's  
19 going to be approximately 200 new police officers in  
20 the Bronx due to the division of the patrol borough.  
21 These are going to be new hires, correct, and if yes,  
why new hires? Why not experienced police officers?

COMMISSIONER TISCH: No, we will do transfers  
into the boroughs. So, no, the 200 officers will be

1 transferred in. They won't be straight out of the  
2 academy.

3 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. And talk to us about  
4 crime in the Bronx. So you mentioned that, you know,  
5 not that crime is down in the Bronx, but you  
6 mentioned some numbers which would signal progress,  
7 but you know, the CompStat report shows that murder  
8 is up by 26 percent this year compared to last year.  
9 Rape is up by 12.4 percent, shooting victims 35.7  
10 percent, shooting incidents 29.7 percent. And of  
11 course, as I mentioned in my opening statement,  
12 public safety is a shared responsibility. Police  
13 officers cannot do it alone. But just curious, what  
14 is the plan to help resolve this crisis, this  
15 emergency that the Bronx is clearly in?

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Okay. So, as of today,  
17 major crime in the borough of the Bronx this year is  
18 down 10.3 percent. It is- that borough is leading  
19 the city in terms of the overall crime reductions. I  
20 just want to make sure that we do not lose sight of  
21 that. The other point that I want to make is beyond  
what is on paper, we- well, let me just go through.  
The 10 percent reduction in the seven major crimes in  
the Bronx is felony assaults down 3.2 percent,

1  
2 robberies down 10.6 percent, burglary down 19.2  
3 percent, grand larceny down 12.4 percent, and auto  
4 theft down 16.8 percent.

5 Last year, in the borough of the Bronx and  
6 citywide we saw double-digit declines both in murders  
7 and in shootings. We saw an 18 percent drop in  
8 murder and a 25 decline in shootings in that borough.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: That was last year?

10 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The way we- that was last  
11 year. We're three months from last year.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right.

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The way we achieved those  
14 record numbers was using our violence reduction plan,  
15 where we- or one of the things we did, which is  
16 taking hundreds of new officers out of the academy,  
17 putting them on foot posts on the streets and in the  
18 locations and at the times where they are needed most  
19 specifically to address gun violence.

20 That plan worked incredibly well this year. I  
21 also want to be clear that the Bronx as a borough got  
the vast majority of the new recruits, the foot  
posts, the people that we assigned to work foot  
posts. It got way more than any other borough in the  
City of New York.

1  
2           So, the resources are there. The staffing in  
3 Bronx Patrol Commands is up. We are doing this  
4 additional split that is going to add more focus,  
5 attention, specialty units and officers to the  
6 borough, and Chief LiPetri can add now more about  
7 what his crime fighting strategies have been to  
8 address this slight uptick that you are seeing over  
9 the past two months.

10           CHIEF LIPETRI: So, just, you know, the  
11 Commissioner spoke about the reduction in shootings  
12 and- the Bronx led the city in reduction of shooting  
13 incidents last year, led the city of New York with  
14 over 100 less shooting victims. We have seen a  
15 slight uptick in violence in the Bronx. We attribute  
16 it to three factors, some narcotics-related  
17 shootings, some Krewe-related shootings, and we do  
18 have a small uptick in some of our licensed and  
19 unlicensed premises.

20           We've identified 17 violence reduction zones in  
21 the Bronx, the most in any patrol borough. We've  
22 been deploying to those zones since the beginning of  
23 the year, and while we're deployed to those zones,  
24 we've had one shooting in those 17 violence reduction  
25 zones. We talk about precision policing, not just

1  
2 with field deployment, though field deployment is the  
3 number one crime strategy for the New York City  
4 Police Department, it's also about precision  
5 investigations into krewes that plague the Bronx  
6 community, and I want to give an example.

7  
8 There is a specific krewe that lives and- really  
9 lives within two housing developments, in Melrose  
10 Jackson. They were an organized younger krewe, and  
11 our gun violence suppression division looked at that.  
12 We analyzed that with our criminal group database,  
13 and we saw that they were most, if not the most  
14 violent krewe, one of the top three most violent  
15 krewes in New York City, and once we arrested them  
16 and prosecuted them, we have a 40 percent reduction  
17 in shootings in the 40 precinct directly attributed  
18 to phenomenal gang/krewe takedown using precision  
19 policing, data, and some great investigative work.

20  
21 But again, it starts with field deployment. By  
22 far the Bronx gets the most field deployment and also  
23 precision. You want to look at three commands in the  
24 Bronx right now, the 41 precinct down 25 percent in  
25 crime, the 43 down 22 percent in crime, the 44 down  
26 18 percent in crime. The 46 Morris Heights section  
27 of the Bronx last year saw a 54 percent reduction in

1 shooting incidents. It is- we are laser-focused to  
2 continue to drive down crime, not just in the Bronx.

3 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, I would just end by  
4 saying I find it to be an unfair characterization of  
5 the current state to say that major crime in the  
6 Bronx is up.

7 In fact, it is down and it is down big, and it is  
8 down bigger than any borough. It is also the case  
9 that on last year's record-breaking shooting numbers  
10 that included over 100 fewer shootings in the borough  
11 of the Bronx last- what's that? I'm sorry, 100  
12 shooting victims in the Borough of the Bronx last  
13 year, are we up slightly on it, yes, but we are  
14 working the same play book doing the same things, and  
15 on top of that creating a new patrol borough, and I  
16 have every confidence that we are being- acting  
17 responsibly.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right. And you know, the  
19 numbers support some of your points, right? Robbery  
20 is down 10 percent and etcetera, and if you take all  
21 the crime categories, maybe those numbers show a  
specific point, but I'm specifically referring to the  
progress that the city has made on the issue of gun

1 violence. Shootings are down citywide in the Bronx.  
2 They're up 35.7 percent.

3 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes, we understand that, and  
4 I spoke to it.

5 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: So it's safe to say that the  
6 progress related to shootings hasn't reached the  
7 Bronx-

8 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Last year,  
9 there were over-

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] At least on that  
11 specific issue.

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: 100 fewer people shot in the  
13 Borough of the Bronx than the previous year. Last  
14 year-

15 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Talking about  
16 this year.

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The single largest shooting  
18 declines were in the Borough of the Bronx. So, the  
19 year just ended.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] I'm talking  
21 about this year, though.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: We have had three months of  
this year, let's look at the data, but I am telling  
you we are using the same playbook that we used last

1  
2 year, which led to record-breaking results citywide,  
3 but particularly in the Borough of the Bronx.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. So, I'll conclude that  
5 topic on the Bronx crime, but you know, we made  
6 progress last year but it seems like we're going  
7 backwards.

8 COMMISSIONER TISCH: This year is probably the  
9 second safest year for shooting incidents and  
10 shooting victims in the Borough of the Bronx ever. I  
11 will confirm that, but I don't want you to- I don't  
12 want this to be mischaracterized. We are seeing  
13 really huge amount of progress on crime fighting  
14 generally, particularly gun violence generally  
15 citywide.

16 CHIEF LIPETRI: You know, the Police Commissioner  
17 said it, but I just want to- the Bronx right now  
18 leads the City of New York in overall crime  
19 reduction. Leads the City of New York.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Right, but I'm talking about  
21 shootings and murders, though.

CHIEF LIPETRI: We understand the small up- we  
understand the small uptick in gun violence, and  
there's- you know, New York City Police Department is

1 front and center to reduce violence, not just in the  
2 Bronx, but in the city.

3 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay, cool. So, I'll move  
4 onto the next point, but again, I get it. We made  
5 progress in general when you consider all the crime  
6 categories, but the numbers related to shooting  
7 victims and shooting incidents and murder are going  
8 up this year compared to last year. That is-

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Yes, compared  
10 to last year it is up slightly-

11 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Those are  
12 numbers that we cannot ignore under any circumstance.

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And last year was a  
14 record-breaking year for gun violence, and I will not  
15 have the work of the members of the New York City  
16 Police Department mischaracterized.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Moving on to vehicle  
18 theft. So throughout the city we've seen a drastic  
19 increase in vehicle wheel- not even vehicles,  
20 specifically their wheels. There's a few pages that  
21 I follow on social media run by members of my  
community. I know the precinct that I'm in that's a  
big target. Every single day there's new pictures of  
cars basically on the floor, no wheels, and based on

1  
2 the pictures and the videos that I've seen it seems  
3 like it's the same krewe basically literally working  
4 24/7.

5 I'm making that assumption because there's been a  
6 few videos of the same exact white BMW basically  
7 removing the wheels within seconds, and it seems like  
8 this has been going on for years, and I speak to  
9 members of my community, they feel basically helpless  
10 given that every single day it's five or 10 new cars.  
11 So, just wondering- I'm sure all of you know about  
12 this issue. What's being done about this? Has there  
13 been any investigations, any arrests?

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Of course there have been  
15 investigations. This year, thefts of tires and rims  
16 are down 30 percent citywide. Auto crime works on a  
17 number of long-term cases. I'll be very honest.  
18 There are not meaningful consequences for this type  
19 of crime in the City of New York unless we are able  
20 to put together long-term cases, which is what we are  
21 doing, but onesie, twosie [sp?], there are no  
consequences in our criminal justice system for  
stealing tires and rims in practice.

And so the Police Department can- no pun  
intended- keep spinning our wheels, but that is one

1  
2 thing that you should look at if you have concerns  
3 about thefts of tires and rims.

4 CHIEF LIPETRI: I just want to add, the Bronx  
5 this year in tire and rim theft is down 45 percent,  
6 45 percent.

7 So, it leads, again, the city as far as  
8 percentage reduction and I know the Police  
9 Commissioner alluded to it that tire and rim thefts  
10 are down 31 percent citywide led by the Bronx. Yes,  
11 we do have internal investigations into these krewes,  
12 obviously very sensitive, and we are deployed  
13 specifically- mainly on the midnight tours to focus  
14 on these types of thefts along with other vehicular  
15 accessory thefts like airbags and sensors.

16 And I talked about it just before a phenomenal  
17 arrest last night in the Bronx. Though the krewe  
18 went over to the Queens. We're very focused on  
19 intelligence aspect of that. We operationalized that  
20 intelligence, and we ended up arresting two  
21 individuals.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Arrested how many you said?

CHIEF LIPETRI: Two.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Got it. A few questions,  
these are from- speaking with our wonderful Bronx

1  
2 Borough President last night, by the way, former  
3 Chair of the Public Safety Committee. She had a few  
4 questions that she wanted me to ask. Any updates on  
5 the Rodman's Neck Firing Range renovation project in  
6 the Bronx? And also number two, has the NYPD thought  
about creating a Harbor Unit for the Bronx?

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We thought about what?

8 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Creating a Harbor Unit for  
the Bronx.

9 COMMISSIONER TISCH: No, we have not thought  
10 about creating a Harbor Unit for the Bronx. And  
11 Kristine, could you please answer the question in  
Rodman's Neck?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Yes, on Rodman's Neck,  
13 we're commencing the work there. There's a lot of  
14 infrastructure work that needs to be done. So,  
15 it'll- you're not going to see new building  
16 structures for a while, but essentially we've started  
17 and the phases one, two, and three which are creating  
18 a facility storage building, working on the  
19 underground utilities like I said, and then the  
20 utility work throughout the facility, new sewage, new  
21 electric, everything that's needed there to do the  
state of the art training facility. The project is

1  
2 on schedule and it's expected to be completed in the  
3 summer of 2029.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What are factors that you  
5 would consider when thinking about creating a Harbor  
6 Unit? My understanding is- not my district, but my  
7 understanding is that the city island section of the  
8 Bronx has issues in their waters and generally they  
9 rely on the police from Queens or the Harbor Unit  
10 from Queens to help resolve issues in the Bronx. So,  
11 what are factors that would-

12 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Given that  
13 we're not considering it at this time, I want to  
14 provide you a follow-up answer where we can be more  
15 thoughtful about what factors we would consider, but  
16 it's not under consideration at this time.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. So, I'll pass it on to  
18 Council Member Encarnacion for a second round of  
19 questions, and then Council Member Wong.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: I actually- so I  
21 know the last round of questions I just threw in a  
narcotics question. So I wanted to kind of give it  
some context. I know that many of the issues that  
we're seeing in the Bronx, also in East Harlem. I  
serve both Manhattan and the Bronx- around the 125th

1 Street is really around drug selling. It's the drugs  
2 that are being sold there. You know, the car  
3 jackings, the thefts, the retail thefts, a lot of it  
4 is about buying drugs. And so I wanted to kind of  
5 get an idea of what the stats are in terms of- you  
6 know, I haven't heard of like big drug busts, things  
7 like that that are happening in those communities  
8 specifically but also just around communities that  
9 have high levels of shootings or theft. I mean, the  
10 retail theft-

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] You want to  
12 know our narcotics enforcement numbers?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Correct.

14 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We can get you- I mean, we  
15 probably don't have it here for your specific  
16 precincts, but we can get you- follow up with our  
17 narcotics enforcement numbers across your commands.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Yeah. And really,  
19 it is also a plug, because I know that as we look how  
20 do we-

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Oh, the Chief  
has it.

CHIEF LIPETRI: I don't have like specifics, but I  
could just tell you this. Last year in the City of

1  
2 New York there was over a 20 percent increase in  
3 narcotics arrests, with the Bronx leading the number  
4 one borough with over 7,500 narcotics arrests. I've  
5 had personal conversations with DA Clarke, and you  
6 know, her top leadership and specifically have given  
7 them 13 blocks or areas within the Bronx that really  
8 are plagued by narcotics deals and use, and we have  
9 really seen, you know, a nice partnership with some  
10 of the consequences that we need to see when it comes  
11 to arresting these individuals.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Thank you for that.  
13 And then in the 17 violence reduction zones, how do  
14 you see those being broken up once we break up north  
15 and south Bronx? Like where do most of the- where  
16 will most of them-

17 CHIEF LIPETRI: So, I would say the south would  
18 probably get more than the north just because, again,  
19 the data mining and data analytics that goes through  
20 it, also with a little bit of a historical knowledge  
21 on it. But I would say the south would have more  
than enough.

COMMISSIONER TISCH: I also have to say that the  
characterization that underserved communities are not  
experiencing the same crime reductions that the rest

1  
2 of the city are experiencing in the opening  
3 statement, that's entirely wrong. The communities  
4 that have been historically plagued by gun violence  
5 are leading the crime reductions in the City of New  
6 York, because that is where we are putting our field  
7 training officers and our resources on foot posts to  
8 prevent the gun violence.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: And I understand  
10 that. Leading in crime reduction doesn't mean that  
11 there isn't crime anymore there, right? They were  
12 very-

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Of course not.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: High numbers to  
15 begin with.

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: And the work certainly  
17 continues, but what I am reacting to was the Chair's  
18 characterization of the fact that parts of the city  
19 with gun vi- or with historically high levels of gun  
20 violence are not experiencing the same reductions  
21 over the past year and a half or year in three  
months. They certainly are leading the way.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Commissioner, respectfully, I  
was just reciting the information on the CompStat

1  
2 which shows that shooting victims, 35.7 percent  
3 increase, shooting incidents 29.7, so-

4 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Yes, over our  
5 record-

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] I was saying-

7 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Over a record  
8 low year, and I agree with you that-

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] I was just  
10 reciting information that's public information.

11 COMMISSIONER TISCH: I like to set records every  
12 year and I intend to do that this year, including in  
13 the Borough of the Bronx, but I do not appreciate the  
14 mischaracterization of the general work of the  
15 Department.

16 What you said in your opening statement that the  
17 underserved communities in this city are not  
18 experiencing the same reductions that other parts of  
19 the city are. In fact, they are leading them, and  
20 they are leading them because that is where I have  
21 put this department's resources.

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Oh no, I was just  
waiting to see- you're good? Okay. I think- because  
I think my question was around crossing guards. We  
took care of that. And then the khaki pants unit

1  
2 which we also addressed as well. That's my word for  
3 them. I know it's not the official name. I think  
4 all of the questions that I had for the second round  
5 were answered. Thank you so much.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Now, Council  
7 Member Wong.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you, Chair.  
9 Commissioner, in my district it's been years and  
10 years that there's huge problems on abandoned cars,  
11 cars with fake plates, fake insurance stickers.  
12 People move here from out of state and decide to  
13 leave their cars there, because it's an industrial  
14 area, and then they leave them weeks or even months,  
15 and I want to thank the Transportation Bureau and the  
16 traffic agents who work in and around my district.  
17 They have been extremely responsive, and they do  
18 everything they can with the resources they have. My  
19 question is there any plans in this fiscal plan to  
20 increase the headcount for traffic enforcement agents  
21 citywide and especially in Queens North?

22 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, on traffic enforcement  
23 agents we are not yet to our budgeted headcount, and  
24 so no, we are not now requesting additional traffic  
25 enforcement agents. But I agree with you, I am very

1  
2 proud of the work that has been done on row tows. If  
3 you look at- which is really addressing abandoned and  
4 derelict vehicles. 2024, we had 25,760, 2025 was  
5 over 34,000 removals.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Please see if  
7 there's a possibility if you can increase the  
8 headcount. The other limitations is that we hear is  
9 pound space. There's only so much room to store  
10 vehicles, especially chronic illegal parkers and  
11 abandoned cars. Are there any plans to expand pound  
12 capacity?

13 COMMISSIONER TISCH: Yes, our Deputy Commissioner  
14 of Management and Budget, Kristine Ryan, can answer  
15 that.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: So, we are still  
17 unfortunately working with reduced space after the  
18 closure of the Manhattan poundage. You can imagine  
19 real estate is very expensive in the City of  
20 Manhattan, so it has been a challenge to find a piece  
21 of real estate that fits, that will work, and that  
also be done with limited fiscal resources. So we  
have been, you know, towing as we can to the Bronx  
tow pound in the north. We take the north half of  
Manhattan and the other in south, but Queens

1  
2 citywide, we do rely also on an outside vendor to  
3 help with some of our vehicles as well. So, we're  
4 trying to make this work, but-

5 COMMISSIONER TISCH: [interposing] Closing the  
6 Manhattan tow pound really put enormous strain on the  
7 entire system, and I don't think that was a  
8 well-conceived or well thought out decision. We  
9 should be careful before we close police facilities  
10 willy-nilly.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you. My next  
12 questions regarding auxiliary officers. They  
13 volunteer their time often late at night, and we knew  
14 from past tragedies that their work can put them in  
15 real danger. My understanding is that many  
16 auxiliaries are now operating with expired  
17 bullet-resistant vests. What is the current  
18 condition and replacement schedule for auxiliary  
19 vests, and has the Department requested funding in  
20 this financial plan to fully replace them.

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: We certainly have.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER RYAN: Yes, we have requested  
funding to replace the vests for the auxiliary  
officers.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you. Thank you.  
3 Thank you. Thank you, Chair. No more questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Council  
5 Member Wong. I have some few final questions, and  
6 then we'll conclude. We have a very lengthy agenda.  
7 We'll hear from our District Attorneys next. I know  
8 we're a little bit behind schedule.

9 So, a few questions. On the- I guess I'll start  
10 with the bomb squad. Recently, as we saw at Gracie  
11 Mansion and the surrounding area, there was a bomb  
12 threat. What is the budgeted and actual headcount  
13 for the NYPD bomb squad, and do you have sufficient  
14 equipment for the bomb squad like the disposal  
15 robots?

16 COMMISSIONER TISCH: The headcount for the bomb  
17 squad is 37, totalling approximately \$6 million in PS  
18 costs. What's the other part of the question?

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Do you have sufficient  
20 equipment for the bomb squad like the-

21 COMMISSIONER TISCH: You know, it's funny. I'm  
actually with- just spoke to the CO of the bomb squad  
and meeting with him soon to go over any new requests  
that they have for equipment.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: At the Executive Budget  
3 hearing I heard you talk about some of the non-lethal  
4 equipment at our officer's disposal like tasers and  
5 the OC spray, mace. What other equipment does an  
6 officer have access to? I saw a video with officers  
7 with shields.

8 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, patrol officers are  
9 equipped with tasers, with expandable batons, with  
10 straight batons, with OC pepper spray, and they have  
11 access to protective shields.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Last year I heard the  
13 contract for tasers was \$11 million. I wanted to get  
14 an update on the cost of that contract and also the  
15 new transition to the Taser 7 or go beyond the newest  
16 model?

17 COMMISSIONER TISCH: So, the current cost for the  
18 Taser 7 is \$10.7 million. That includes 10,000  
19 devices and cartridges for all members of service.  
20 That's both training and field usage. The NYPD is  
21 currently piloting the Taser 10 with the most recent  
rollout for the Emergency Services Unit.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you for the  
information. Anyone else has any other questions?  
Alright, so I think we are concluded with the first

1 part of this hearing. Thank you so much for joining  
2 today. Thank you for the testimony, and thank you  
3 for all the work you do.

4 [break]

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon, ladies and  
6 gentleman. If you're here for the Public Safety  
7 Preliminary hearing, you're in the right place. Keep  
8 it down please. Let's keep it down. If you're here  
9 for the Public Safety Preliminary hearing, you're in  
10 the right place.

11 Before we start, make sure you silence all  
12 electronic devices, and please do not approach the  
13 dais at any time. If you need assistance, just get  
14 the attention of one of the Sergeant at Arms, and  
15 we'd be more than happy to assist you with whatever-  
16 with whoever you need to meet.

17 In the meantime, make yourself comfortable,  
18 please. We should be starting shortly.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Please settle down. Please  
20 settle down. We're going to begin shortly. Please  
21 find your seats. Settle down, guys. Please find  
your seats. Thank you. And also, update, no one  
approaching the dais. Please, no one is to approach  
the dais.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Welcome, District Attorneys and also Special Narcotics Prosecutor, to our Public Safety budget hearing. It's great to see you all again. Thank you for being here, and also thank you for all the work you do.

I'll provide time for all of you to make an opening statement and then we'll ask questions, but before that I'm going to pass it briefly to the Committee Counsel to swear all of you in, and then we'll start with your opening statements starting with the Bronx District Attorney, and we'll go from right to left.

And we are joined today by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, Staten Island District Attorney Michael McMahon, and Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget Brennan.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If you could all please raise your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before this Committee and respond honestly to Council Member

1  
2 questions? Noting that all witnesses answered  
3 affirmatively, you may begin your testimony.

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Is this on? Good  
5 morning. Oh, good afternoon. Good afternoon, Public  
6 Safety Chair, Oswald Feliz- I don't see Finance Chair  
7 Linda Lee- and all the members of the Public Safety  
8 Committee, Council Member Encarnacion, Phil Wong,  
9 Sandy Nurse, Kamillah Hanks, thank you all for being  
10 here this morning. Thank you for giving me this  
11 opportunity to speak with you today.

12 I am Darcel Clark, Bronx District Attorney. I've  
13 just spent 10 years of delivering justice. This year  
14 marks my 10th anniversary as Bronx District Attorney.  
15 There are many challenges to serve the 1.4 million  
16 people of the Bronx, but undoubtedly, these have been  
17 the most rewarding years of my life. I owe a  
18 tremendous debt of gratitude to the ADAs and  
19 professional staff who stood beside me over the years  
20 and modeling excellence.

21 To each staff member, present and former, I say  
thank you. The Bronx is safer and better because of  
you. You inspire me as we pursue justice with  
integrity together. Recently, a Daily News front  
page headline described the Bronx as the most deadly

1  
2 borough. The article provided data showing that the  
3 Bronx has suffered half of the city's murders thus  
4 far this year.

5 My prosecutors and NYPD worked swiftly to charge  
6 defendants in 10 of those cases already. But to me,  
7 they're not just cases or stats. Every death  
8 represents a person who belonged to a family, a  
9 community in the Bronx. Each person has people who  
10 love them and mourn them, from a father and  
11 hardworking Uber driver shot by a man who crashed  
12 into his car, to a 16-year-old high school football  
13 player who was forced to run from shots fired near a  
14 McDonald's, to an unsuspecting 19-year-old man shot  
15 randomly while walking down the street at two o'clock  
16 in the afternoon.

17 Behind each violent incident there's an  
18 underlying truth, the borough in direst need of help  
19 receives the least resources. My testimony today  
20 echoes my pleas before the City Council two years  
21 ago. The neighborhoods suffering from high rates of  
poverty and crime remain the same as when I was a  
child.

The tragic difference today is that more of our  
youth have access to guns, creating a spike in youth

1  
2 violence. The Bronx has 20 percent of the city's  
3 youth population, 30 percent of youth gun arrests,  
4 and nearly half of the youth arrested for shootings.

5 Here's the sad fact, more than a third of the  
6 city's youth shooting victims are in the Bronx. Too  
7 many kids are losing their future to the barrel of a  
8 gun. My borough needs resources that will encourage  
9 our young people to seize an opportunity over picking  
10 up a gun.

11 Opportunities improve chances to improve  
12 employment, access to education, pathways to housing,  
13 and open doors to mental health and substance abuse  
14 services, addressing the underlying conditions that  
15 lead to crime. These resources are not optional.  
16 They are necessities, tangible investments that will  
17 bolster our community and provide hope. They are  
18 concrete solutions for reducing crime and improving  
19 our community. And when the Bronx succeeds, the city  
20 succeeds.

21 My office is doing our part. We held several  
reentry and employment fairs throughout the year with  
a focus on neighborhoods where many formerly  
incarcerated people reside. Each event leaves me  
more inspired. At one fair, I was approached by a

1  
2 man who was recently paroled. He was there getting  
3 an ID, trying on a donated suit to wear to a job  
4 interview, and speaking with potential employers. He  
5 said to me, I can't believe that you're doing this,  
6 and he kept saying that to me, and he said thank you.  
7 This is a small example of how my office  
8 intentionally serves the people of the Bronx who need  
9 more.

10 Given the community needs, our budget requests  
11 focus on therapy for crime victims, revitalizing  
12 youth justice, holistic engagement for families in  
13 violent neighborhoods, alternatives to prosecution  
14 and incarceration and detention, and continued  
15 support for South Bronx Community Justice Center.  
16 The NYPD submitted 52,211 arrests in the Bronx to the  
17 Bronx District Attorney's office in 2025, a nine  
18 percent increase from 2024, and a 22 percent increase  
19 since 2019.

20 In 2025, our Crime Victims Assistance Bureau  
21 delivered free support service to 8,774 new and  
existing clients, 493 of them were children. CVAB  
provided nearly 55,000 direct assistance services and  
referrals to victims of sexual assault, domestic  
violence, human trafficking, and elder abuse.

1  
2 Our trauma therapist provided 22,000 sessions to  
3 230 new clients and 74 pre-existing clients. They  
4 provided trauma therapy to 60 children. We provide  
5 all of these services without costs, regardless of  
6 whether there is an active criminal case. I stand  
7 with victims of crimes and their families. I stood  
8 with the parents of Nicholas Domenici [sp?], the  
9 toddler killed by exposure to fentanyl in a home  
10 daycare center that was a front for a narcotics  
11 operation, fulfilling my promise that the operators  
12 of the daycare would face justice in the Bronx for  
13 their beautiful son's murder, and on March 4th I  
14 stood with them as the defendants were sentenced to  
15 25 years to life.

16 CVAB advocates and therapists were there, too,  
17 and will be with them for as long as they need them.  
18 Unfortunately, CVAB has a shortage of therapists. To  
19 bridge this gap in service, we're asking for \$2.2  
20 million dollars in fiscal year 2027 and \$2.1 million  
21 in baseline funding to hire more therapists.

When considering our youth, I note that we raise  
the age, but now we must lift a generation by  
revitalizing the youth justice system to stem the

1  
2 loss of our young people to gun violence, death, and  
3 prison.

4 I established a Youth Justice Bureau with ADAs  
5 and professional staff, all of whom have been trained  
6 on adolescent development, programming, alternative  
7 dispositions that are available to hold youth  
8 accountable when appropriate. During its first year,  
9 the Youth Justice Bureau screened all juvenile and  
10 adolescent matters through a youth justice lens and  
11 strengthened relationships with the courts, law  
12 enforcement, community partners and service  
13 providers.

14 When staffing is complete, the Bureau's  
15 prosecutors will handle all cases involving youth  
16 defendants. This bureau is piloting an initiative  
17 called the Justice Innovation for Bronx Youth, or  
18 JIBY, as we call it. The goal of this program is to  
19 serve high-risk youth with partners providing  
20 critical screenings, case management services, and an  
21 assessment tool and training, mental health and  
substance use services, credible messengers, and  
spiritual guidance.

The JIBY pilot is funded in part by a federal  
grant of \$650,000 over three years. To receive these

1  
2 funds, our office must max the funding received over  
3 three years. I'm asking the city to provide \$600,000  
4 to cover the total cost of this pilot. Upon its  
5 success, it will serve as a template for expansion.  
6 In January, I held a youth justice stakeholder's  
7 convening to increase cross-agency and cross-sector  
8 partnerships and identify practical strategies for  
9 prevention, intervention, diversion, and re-entry  
10 support.

11 Our shared goal is to build a more equitable,  
12 effective youth justice system in New York City.  
13 There was a consensus among the 40+ participants that  
14 the city should seek further resources. I am  
15 informed- I informed the stakeholders that since  
16 Raise the Age Law was passed and funded as part of  
17 the state budget in 2017, the city has been excluded  
18 from receiving state funds.

19 I'm pleased to report that the Assembly will  
20 include a new proposal to make New York City eligible  
21 to receive state funding to support expenses for  
Raise the Age, and the Senate has a bill to carve out  
\$50 million to establish the Youth Justice Innovation  
Fund. Another resource my office developed is called  
Bronx Restore, a prevention and engagement program

1  
2 for 30 high-risk individuals in the St. Marys Park  
3 area and Fordham area which have high rates of gun  
4 violence and other violent offenses.

5 The state invested \$3 million in this public  
6 health approach to the root causes of violence.  
7 Community-based partners provide a stipend for  
8 participants who partake in trauma therapy, job  
9 readiness, financial literacy, conflict resolution,  
10 restorative justice, internship opportunities,  
11 mentorship and case management.

12 For years I have been advocating for a South  
13 Bronx Community Justice Center. The Mayor's Office  
14 and the City Council each allocated \$1 million in  
15 operating costs for the city-owned site at 630  
16 Jackson Avenue at the nexus of Motthaven, Melrose,  
17 and Morrisania, and I have to tell you, I'm deeply  
18 appreciative of that.

19 However, there are significant additional costs  
20 in capital expenses. I ask that the city make the  
21 South Bronx Community Justice Center a priority now  
by committing to baseline operational costs and  
funding capital expenses for renovations, upgrades  
and repairs of the site.

1  
2 Every other borough has at least one justice  
3 center. The Bronx is long overdue to have its own.  
4 In closing, I'm here today proud of my exceptional  
5 staff and advocating for the 1.4 million people of  
6 the Bronx. Their admirable persistence, resilience,  
7 fortitude and optimism, in a word, their grit,  
8 represents the best of this great city. When the  
9 Bronx succeeds, again, the city succeeds.

10 The Bronx is not only where I serve, it's the  
11 place that I've always called home. For me, this is  
12 personal. I speak from my heart, and I hope that you  
13 will take it to heart. Thank you very much for your  
14 time.

15 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Good afternoon.  
16 Certainly a hard act to follow. It's been my  
17 privilege and honor to serve those 10 years alongside  
18 DA Clark as District Attorney of Staten Island. Good  
19 afternoon.

20 My name is Michael McMahon, and I'm also honored  
21 to sit here with my other colleagues who represent  
the best in prosecution, not only in our city, but in  
our country. Some of us are also alumni of this  
august body and it's always a pleasure to come, if  
you will, and I thank you, Chairman Feliz and

1  
2 Minority Whip- Majority Whip Kamillah Hanks from the  
3 great borough of Staten Island, Council Member  
4 Encarnacion, Council Member Nurse, and Council Member  
5 Wong.

6 Thank you for your attention to our testimony  
7 today and giving us the opportunity to discuss with  
8 you these very important issues. As Staten Island's  
9 chief law enforcement officer, I am incredibly proud  
10 of all the work we have done in my office. Together  
11 with our partners in the NYPD, neighboring law  
12 enforcement agencies, and all of our partners who  
13 call our beloved Staten Island home to make our  
14 borough a safer place.

15 While there remains much work to be done,  
16 everybody here today should be encouraged by the  
17 record-low crime numbers reported on Staten Island  
18 last year. Violent crime, particularly homicides and  
19 shootings, reached historic lows in our borough in  
20 2025. For the third straight year, Staten Island  
21 recorded double-digit decreases in stolen vehicles.  
Catalytic converter thefts were down over 90 percent  
in 2025, and as I stand here or sit here before you  
today, incidents of retail theft are down almost 50  
percent on Staten Island.

1  
2           Additionally, we also saw encouraging progress in  
3 our fight against the opioid and overdose epidemic  
4 with Staten Island recording a 49 percent decrease in  
5 opioid overdose deaths, the largest decrease in all  
6 of New York City. And while Staten Island proudly  
7 remains the safest community of 500,000 residents in  
8 the country, now is not the time for us or anyone  
9 else to take a victory lap.

10           We know that domestic violence, youth crime, and  
11 the omnipresence of scams remain massive public  
12 safety issues for Staten Islanders and their  
13 families, and we are committed with your help to  
14 doing everything in our power to turn the tide and  
15 help restore both public safety and peace of mind  
16 back to our beloved borough.

17           However, in order to do that, we need the  
18 administration and this Council's help. During my  
19 testimony before you last year and the year before  
20 that, I warned the Council that Staten Island was  
21 facing a dire shortage of uniformed police officers  
and detectives in our borough.

          Despite our persistent pleas, Staten Island has  
20 percent fewer cops patrolling our shores now than  
we did five years ago, and fewer cops deployed on

1  
2 Staten Island than there were in 1968 when our  
3 population was half the size it is today. Our  
4 borough, and New York City as a whole, needs the  
5 uniformed personnel and staffing necessary to  
6 prevent, deter, and properly investigate crime.

7 Now is not the time to roll back the gains that  
8 have been made. A persistent but underrated  
9 significant driver of crime on Staten Island and one  
10 where we as a city must dedicate more resources to  
11 combatting is domestic violence. A terrible reality  
12 that impacts far too many families and we know goes  
13 widely under-reported.

14 On Staten Island domestic violence helped to  
15 drive a significant increase, more than 25 percent,  
16 in incidents of rape last year, as well as a majority  
17 of felony assaults committed in our borough. As it  
18 stands now, domestic violence accounts for nearly a  
19 quarter of all index crimes committed on Staten  
20 Island. And while we thank this body for supporting  
21 the creation of our Intimate Partner Sexual Violence  
Unit, we once again ask that our City Council Members  
support the life-saving work of our domestic violence  
bureau and victim services unit and continue the DOVE  
funding allocations.

1  
2 While there are many pressing public issues-  
3 safety challenges, none are more important right now  
4 as the alarming increase in youth crime and the  
5 harmful impact of New York State's Raise the Age  
6 Laws.

7 Raise the Age reforms began with the laudable  
8 goal of minimizing the exposure of 16 and 17 year  
9 olds to the adult criminal justice system. Half a  
10 decade later, however, our communities have seen the  
11 flaws in this approach that was adopted. All too  
12 frequently, adolescent offenders face little to no  
13 consequences for serious crimes, including a majority  
14 of gun crimes and the most violent assaults.  
15 Furthermore, courts and prosecutors are forced to  
16 disregard patterns of violence and recidivism and  
17 victims lose access to justice when cases are  
18 re-routed to the Family Court system.

19 Unfortunately, the numbers support this growing  
20 concern. Overall, youth arrests were up 44 percent  
21 on Staten Island last year with felony youth arrests  
increasing by nearly 54 percent. Even more  
concerning, as of this month, 12 percent of New York  
City's shooting victims are between the ages of 10

1  
2 and 17; 21 percent of shooting perpetrators fall  
3 within that same group, age group.

4 Over a quarter of all gun arrests on Staten  
5 Island last year involved individuals under the age  
6 of 20. Numbers on paper can feel abstract, but in  
7 the real world, numbers are not statistics, they are  
8 lives. Arrests are up, victims are up. How can  
9 anyone say that the law is working as intended and  
10 doesn't need to be tweaked.

11 It is for these reasons and more that my office  
12 remains dedicated to addressing the underlying  
13 conditions of crime while encouraging supportive  
14 programming that builds families and our youth up.  
15 Thanks to vital funding allocated by this body, RCDA  
16 has partnered with the Center for Justice Innovation  
17 to actively engage and support at-risk youth impacted  
18 by the criminal justice system.

19 With \$635,000 coming from RCDA and an additional  
20 \$125,000 coming from the City Council discretionary  
21 funding, CJI maintains a wide variety of youth  
programming, including restorative and peer  
facilitated diversion programming, leadership  
development, violence prevention and community  
healing, place making, and so much more.

1  
2           Once a young person ends up in Family Court or  
3 before us in the youth part of Criminal Court, they  
4 have likely experienced so much trauma and missed  
5 countless opportunities for intervention. That is  
6 why programming like that being offered by CJI and  
7 their partner organizations is so critically  
8 important because an ounce of prevention is worth a  
9 pound of prosecution, particularly in the case of our  
10 kids.

11           I am equally proud to share that my office  
12 utilizes close to 40 different diversion programs  
13 from a variety of different providers, ensuring that  
14 nearly 40 percent of all arrestees on Staten Island  
15 are offered some sort of an alternative to  
16 incarceration.

17           However, for far too long, Richmond County  
18 District Attorney's Office has done this critical  
19 work with one arm tied behind our backs. Staten  
20 Island remains without a Community Justice Center,  
21 and while we graciously received \$5 million in  
capital money two years ago at the request of Council  
Member Hanks, capital funding is desperately needed  
to correct this inequity and bring this dream to  
fruition.

1  
2 As my office continues to work tirelessly to  
3 combat these challenges, our success depends entirely  
4 on us working together to make our city as safe as  
5 possible. We have remained vigilant and consistent  
6 in our dedication to the rule of law, to the  
7 protection of victims of crime, as well as the rights  
8 of the accused and the overall improvement of public  
9 safety on Staten Island. But I must reiterate in the  
10 strongest possible terms, as always, we need your  
11 help.

12 With that said, I will focus the remainder of my  
13 testimony on highlighting our greatest challenges as  
14 well as our priority budget needs for Fiscal 2027  
15 with fuller explanation of them in the written  
16 testimony that we submitted.

17 First and foremost, as I mentioned, Staten Island  
18 is the only borough without a physical Community  
19 Justice Center. We have an old courthouse identified  
20 as a site. It needs a capital ingestion of- infusion  
21 of money, and with that we could give Staten  
Islanders the same advantages to getting out of the  
criminal justice system that others have in the rest  
of the city, and we request your help for that.

1  
2           Second, we would request the addition of three  
3 felony Assistant District Attorneys to the Domestic  
4 Violence Bureau. Right now- we created for the first  
5 time a free-standing domestic violence bureau in  
6 Staten Island. We continue to focus on that issue.  
7 It is a major one for us, and we need the personnel  
8 and the people trained to deal with victimcentric  
9 prosecutions, and with your help we could make that a  
10 reality.

11           We would like your help in expanding the workload  
12 of our Juvenile Justice Unit by giving us the funding  
13 to hire the personnel necessary to deal with the  
14 youth crimes that both myself and DA Clark have  
15 already outlined and what a challenge they are for  
16 us.

17           Fourth, the issue of cyber security and scams is  
18 real. I'm sure your constituents are telling you  
19 about all the phishing email and texts that they get  
20 and how they are victims of that, and we would like  
21 to train and have each one of our felony bureaus  
someone who is trained in the area of cyber crimes.  
So whether it's around a domestic violence crime or a  
traditional grand larceny, that we would be able to  
investigate and prosecute those cases.

1  
2 As we all know, mental health is a major crisis  
3 in the City of New York and our country, and so we  
4 have a request for hiring experts in the mental  
5 health substance use disorder and alternative to  
6 incarceration unit so that we can better provide  
7 people who are in mental health distress and to try  
8 to keep them out of jail or prison.

9 And then lastly, I believe we're the only- we  
10 like to say that on Staten Island. We're the only  
11 ones who don't have a General Counsel in the office,  
12 and as our office has grown in size and importance in  
13 the issues that it deals with, we would like your  
14 help to have the funding to hire a general counsel so  
15 that the men and women in our office and issues of  
16 employment have the same rights and protections that  
17 other city employees have, and that we can provide-  
18 continue to work to strive to be the type of office  
19 that the people of Staten Island deserve.

20 I want to thank you for your time, attention, and  
21 consideration of my testimony. It would be my  
22 pleasure at the end to answer any questions, and we  
23 look forward to our continued partnership with the  
24 New York City Council, in particular Council Member  
25 Hanks and Carr and Morano, our representatives,

1  
2 striving to make Staten Island the best place that it  
3 can be and the safest and strongest community that it  
4 possibly can be. Thank you.

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Good afternoon,  
6 Chair Oswald Feliz, to all the members of the  
7 committee, and of course, to Council Member Sandy  
8 Nurse, as I am her constituent. It's good to see all  
9 of you here today. It's an honor to join my  
10 colleagues, and I appreciate the opportunity to share  
11 in the progress we've made in Brooklyn improving  
12 safety and fairness, and I ask the City Council for  
13 your continued support. I'm happy to report that  
14 last year was a record year in Brooklyn.

15 In 2025, Brooklyn set a new standard in safety  
16 with the lowest number of homicides and the lowest  
17 number of shootings since the NYPD began keeping  
18 these statistics. That momentum has continued so far  
19 this year. Homicides are down an additional 64  
20 percent from last year's historic lows, and shootings  
21 are down approximately 15 percent.

As someone who grew up in one of the toughest  
neighborhoods in New York City in East New York in  
the 80s and 90s, this transformation is truly  
incredible. I'm grateful for the hard work of my

1  
2 staff and our partners in the NYPD, and of course,  
3 the many community leaders and partners who show up  
4 every day in the county to do the hard work. But  
5 while we're setting new standards for safety, the  
6 Brooklyn DAs office remains hampered by a structural  
7 funding inequity rooted in the cost of our rented  
8 commercial office space.

9 We remain the only District Attorney's office  
10 without space in any municipal buildings. Brooklyn  
11 prosecutes the highest case volume in the city by  
12 far. Last year it was approximately 80,000 cases,  
13 79,000 and change. We're up five percent this year.  
14 Looking like we'll be over 80,000 this year.

15 We also serve the largest population, one of the  
16 most diverse populations, and we handle thousands  
17 more felonies than any other borough, including  
18 thousands of more violent felony offenses. But  
19 because Brooklyn has such a large part of our budget  
20 consumed by rent, what's left over to actually do our  
21 work is severely compressed.

When you adjust for the cost of our office space,  
our peer office is some, have up to 51 percent more  
funding per arrest than Brooklyn. I'll say that  
again, 51 percent more per arrest than Brooklyn. The

1  
2 disparities are also- if you look at by resident,  
3 they're even more stark. Two of the offices have 80  
4 percent more funding than Brooklyn per resident  
5 served after accounting for rent.

6 Now, my point is not that any of my colleagues  
7 here deserve any less money to continue to do their  
8 important work. My point is that Brooklyn is in  
9 unique need to catch up. When our prosecutors are  
10 stretched too thin they have less time to evaluate  
11 each case. They have less time to engage victims and  
12 witnesses, and they have less time for diversion and  
13 restorative justice approaches. I'm asking the  
14 Council to address this structural inequity and it is  
15 within that context that I ask for your support for  
16 these requests this year.

17 First, we're seeking dedicated funding to combat  
18 hate crimes, something I was grateful to discuss with  
19 Speaker Menin earlier this month. Brooklyn typically  
20 sees among the most hate crimes in the city and our  
21 numbers remain up year after year.

22 In fact, we're up 137 percent in hate crimes in  
23 the past five years. When I established a Hate  
24 Crimes Bureau in 2018, the first in the city, we  
25 didn't receive any funding for it. We simply

1  
2 diverted resources from other parts of our office,  
3 but because hate crimes have more than doubled since  
4 2018, we need dedicated funding to properly meet this  
5 challenge.

6 Of course, you know, much of these hate crimes in  
7 Brooklyn, more than 50 percent of those hate crimes  
8 are antisemitic hate crimes, and it's an increasing  
9 number of cases each year. We're also asking for  
10 support for our Diversion and Restorative Justice  
11 program. These approaches, I think, you know, most  
12 of my colleagues here agree, help to produce lower  
13 recidivism and higher victim satisfaction, but  
14 handling cases with individualized attention requires  
15 labor-intensive work.

16 I know many members of the Council at large have  
17 expressed interest in Restorative Justice work in  
18 particular and I hope you'll support the investments  
19 needed to embed Restorative Justice into the culture  
20 of our office. Our budget request this year also  
21 includes funding to create a Housing Justice Bureau  
to protect seniors and others from deed fraud and  
predatory scams.

These crimes can force victims from their homes  
and rob families of generational wealth. Much of

1  
2 Brooklyn is ground zero for these cases, especially  
3 central Brooklyn. Members of our Brooklyn delegation  
4 have raised this issue directly with me because of  
5 the impact on vulnerable constituents and we need  
6 your support for a comprehensive approach.

7 That would include prevention through education,  
8 harm mitigation using appropriate civil tools, and  
9 prosecution as appropriate, but this bureau would  
10 also do more than simply prosecute people in that  
11 thing. It would do some of the work that we really  
12 need to see in this city- holding unscrupulous  
13 landlords accountable during illegal shut-offs,  
14 lock-outs, and other harassing practices that rise to  
15 the level of criminality.

16 Many of you have read the stories in the paper  
17 where someone will claim there's a leak, and they'll  
18 come back into their apartment and the landlord had  
19 entered their apartment when they weren't home and  
20 removed their kitchen, their bathroom, making the  
21 apartment uninhabitable.

22 And I know of you also care about animals as I  
23 do, but due to the compression in our budget, we've  
24 been unable to establish an animal crimes unit.  
25 These cases are often heartbreaking and they require

1  
2 careful coordination with the NYPD and the ASPCA, and  
3 extra attention to the evidence which is usually a  
4 living animal. We're asking for funding to create a  
5 dedicated unit to ensure these cases receive the  
6 attention they deserve.

7 We're also asking for critical investments in  
8 information technology. Our IT staff is less than  
9 half the size of other offices, yet, we manage a  
10 higher caseload, and we add terabytes of new digital  
11 evidence every single day. We cannot handle this  
12 growing volume efficiently or safeguard our cyber  
13 threats without this investment. It's critical. And  
14 just to put some additional emphasis on it, because  
15 we have thousands more cases, our digital needs are  
16 even higher, and they're growing.

17 Just on body cams alone, you know, a terabyte is  
18 literally well over 100 iPhones a day. That's how  
19 much volume we're being asked to store a day, and we  
20 have to store it often for 25 years or more. And  
21 finally, we're asking for funding to continue and  
expand Project Restore. This is the program that the  
City Council has funded for the last few years, and I  
want to say thank you. This program gives young  
people caught in cycles of gang violence a real

1  
2 offramp. It's counseling and job skills, life  
3 skills, and restorative justice that saves and  
4 transforms lives. I think it's a big part of the  
5 reason why Brooklyn has seen a tremendous reduction  
6 in shootings and homicides, especially in the area  
7 where these programs work.

8 We've seen that those areas have seen tremendous  
9 declines in shootings. It was launched in Bed-Stuy.  
10 Gun violence has gone down there, and we're bringing  
11 this model finally to Brownsville. I'd like the City  
12 Council to understand that when Columbia University  
13 reviewed our program and the great success that it  
14 had in transforming lives, it also noted that for  
15 every dollar invested into the program, the city  
16 saved \$6.70 in incarceration and emergency costs.

17 So it's not just a proven public safety approach  
18 that's in Brooklyn and now coming to the Bronx. It's  
19 also sound fiscal policy. Our work in Brooklyn has  
20 also proven that we can lead with safety and  
21 fairness, even with the limited resources that we  
have, but the structural compression of our budget is  
imperiling that continued progress, so I ask for your  
support to deal with some of this.

1  
2 I've testified about the structural inequity in  
3 our budget before. I am grateful to this City  
4 Council for the funding that you did give me last  
5 year, especially for project restore and some other  
6 programs dealing with domestic violence and youth  
7 violence. I grew up in a different Brooklyn than the  
8 one that we have today, but I'm looking forward to  
9 making sure that we can continue that success. Thank  
10 you.

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Good afternoon. My name  
12 is Melinda Katz. I am the Queens District Attorney.  
13 I want to thank you for welcoming us back. I was a  
14 Council Member for a lot of years with Michael  
15 McMahon. Always nice to be back in the house. I  
16 want to congratulate our Chairman, Chairman Feliz,  
17 and thank my Council Member from Queens, Phil Wong,  
18 for being here and all the other Council Members.

19 I know there's a lot to do as Council Members,  
20 and we appreciate that you have stayed to hear us and  
21 our needs and what we hope that we have accomplished  
as District Attorneys of our counties. So, Queens  
County is also a very busy county, and what's  
interesting is those that are members of Queens know  
that historically we have been underfunded in a lot

1 of the issues. It's not just criminal justice. A  
2 lot of its cultural affairs. A lot of it is  
3 different subjects that have come up through the  
4 years. We had the same fights when I was on the  
5 budget negotiations committee 15 years ago, and we  
6 continue to have those arguments about Queens. My  
7 stats in my office, we have handled 60,000 arrests  
8 since 2025. We arraigned 45,000 cases. We resolved  
9 44,000 cases, and we assisted nearly 5,000 victims  
through our Crime Victims Advocacy.

10 While shooting incidents are down 24 percent  
11 overall in the city, Queens County saw a decrease of  
12 25 percent, and while the number of shooting victims  
13 citywide decreased 22 percent we saw a decrease in 25  
percent.

14 Interestingly enough in my office we also have  
15 ADAs that go to almost every crime scene, that is a  
16 violent crime scene or a homicide or a vehicular  
17 crime scene. In '25 we visited 159 homicide crime  
scenes and 74 vehicular collision cases.

18 So, we do that on a daily basis. It helps when  
19 we have ADAs at the scene. It helps the police do  
20 the investigation. It helps with our warrants. It

1 helps to know the case from the very beginning, and  
2 we have found that to be priceless in our office.

3 We are asking for an additional \$12.5 million,  
4 but I'm going to get into that in a second if I can.  
5 I would like to go over some of the ways that we have  
6 utilized our budget.

7 First of all, in the borough of Queens County we  
8 get less per person in almost everything in New York  
9 City, right? So, we get on the average about \$40  
10 less a resident than any other borough on the  
11 average. We get less per arrest. We get less per  
12 arraignment, and it has been historical, but I have  
13 no doubt that this council will try to help with our  
14 inequities, and we would appreciate that. But  
15 deposit all that, we have a crime strategies- so we  
16 have made getting guns off the street a main priority  
17 in Queens County.

18 Our Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau  
19 continues to lead against the fight of ghost guns.  
20 We took 38 percent of the ghost guns off the street  
21 last year or the year before and continued it in '25.  
38 percent of them in the whole City of New York came  
out of Queens that we got off of the street.

1  
2 We also worked to make sure that the gangs are  
3 investigated and dealt with in a way that helps our  
4 young people not be determined to think that gangs  
5 are their chosen family. We don't accept that in  
6 Queens county. We don't accept that hopefully in the  
7 City of New York. We have a Violent Criminal  
8 Enterprise Bureau that started under my  
9 administration. We have taken many investigations  
10 and moved them to make sure that we're not only  
11 arresting and getting off the street the gangs, but  
12 also working to make sure that any young person that  
13 got caught up in it is also getting the help they  
14 need to stay out of the criminal justice system,  
15 which is why we developed the Gun Diversion Program a  
16 few years ago in Queens.

17 The participants in the Gun Diversion Program  
18 which is very heavily vetted, by the way, makes sure  
19 that they have a year where they're going to school  
20 or they're working, but also that the rest of their  
21 time is taken care of as well with services. We work  
with the Fortune Society on that. We have found it  
to be extremely successful in making sure that people  
graduate from there and don't end up back in our  
system.

1  
2 We've also participated in 12 gun buybacks. So  
3 we can pro- we can't prosecute our way out of  
4 problems. We also need to do gun buybacks. We've  
5 gotten 700 guns off the street through a gun buyback,  
6 and we are proud of that. That means 700 guns that  
7 are not shooting anyone, that are not in the hands of  
8 people that are going to utilize them in the  
9 community.

10 And so we work closely with the churches and the  
11 community on those programs, as well. Retail theft  
12 is a huge issue in Queens County. We all know the  
13 feeling of standing online waiting to pay your bills.  
14 Someone walks in, takes a knapsack and walks out with  
15 a bunch of items.

16 We use our Investigations Department to  
17 investigate long-term thefts. Last time we arrest-  
18 we went and investigated and managed to work and get  
19 a Home Depot group of individuals that were going  
20 state to state, nine different states, 128 Home  
21 Depots, 26- you know, over 2,000 places or items that  
they went in or incidents that they went in and stole  
items from a Home Depot from.

And we think it's really important, because that  
really says a lot to the community. You know, we can

1  
2 all tell you the gun numbers are down. We can all  
3 tell you that shootings are down, but when you're  
4 standing in line at that store and you see someone  
5 walking out with items, to you it tends to be 100  
6 percent, because you're seeing it right in front of  
7 you.

8 At the same time, we do have a Bureau of Housing  
9 and Worker Protection and we spent a lot of resources  
10 on deed theft. Deed theft has become a major issue  
11 in Queens County in addition to squatters, and you  
12 know, we manage to get people's homes back. The  
13 legislature passed a law about two years ago that  
14 allows us to get homes back to third parties who have  
15 bought homes that they were not able to buy, and  
16 people that sold them had them illegally.

17 So, we work quite often in making sure that we  
18 get people's homes back, you know, homes that they've  
19 worked for for generations sometimes, and we make  
20 sure that we get them back. At the same time, we  
21 spent a lot of our resources on the community. We go  
into the community. We go to the Community Boards.  
We go to precinct councils so that people feel  
comfortable referring their cases to us so that there  
is a knowledge of law enforcement, that we put a face

1  
2 to law enforcement, that we gain hopefully trust and  
3 cooperation from our witnesses and from our victims,  
4 and I believe that's a very important part of what  
5 our office does.

6 But that- and we also send people into our  
7 schools, and we don't just send them into junior high  
8 schools and high schools, we also send them into  
9 elementary schools so that they also put a face on  
10 someone that is not an attorney who cares deeply that  
11 our youth does not end up in the criminal justice  
12 system. And I do have a youth empowerment group that  
13 does that every single day, and that's all they do is  
14 work to make sure that our young people don't end up  
15 in the criminal justice system, and it has been quite  
16 successful.

17 The schools seem to like it. The community  
18 groups have them speak at their organizations, and  
19 the youth then feel comfortable going to the people  
20 we have in the community and asking for help, and  
21 their parents or guardians feel comfortable as well  
approaching us.

But all of this is done with less money per  
individual, per resident, per arrest in the city. So  
I am requesting money not only for helping out-

1 because we also have that issue where we pay rent.  
2 We are actually 950 people in five locations, some of  
3 which we pay rent to, some of which we don't. And so  
4 we spend a lot of money on that as well. But the  
5 money that we do need extra is going to fund the  
6 Rehabilitation and Restoration Services Bureau, our  
7 Crime Victims Advocacy, interpreter staff- we need  
8 more interpreter staff.

9 We need people- more people that speak different  
10 languages. We are 190 countries and almost 300  
11 languages in the borough of Queens County. I need to  
12 be able to service my witnesses and my victims when  
13 they come in for help and the defendants when they  
14 come in for help to make sure that people understand  
15 and that there's someone that is accessible on those  
16 services.

17 For human trafficking, we also have a Bureau of  
18 Human Trafficking, which has been unbelievable in  
19 researching those individuals that are forced not  
20 only into sex trafficking but into labor trafficking  
21 as well, forced to work, or forced without pay, pay  
being held, passports being held.

So we want to expand those services as well. The  
details of our funding application is in my testimony

1  
2 that we have handed to you. I can only say that we  
3 try to do justice at every level with any amount of  
4 money we have. It would certainly be a better thing  
5 for our office if we were able to spend the money not  
6 only on prosecution, but also on making sure we keep  
7 people out of the criminal justice system. I do  
8 believe that we are owed- we owe our constituents  
9 that as a balance.

10 I thank the Council for our funding for last  
11 year, for- we got money for a crime lab, which will  
12 be unbelievably helpful in making sure that we're  
13 able to download phones and computers, and we can do  
14 it right on site, and so thank you for being so  
15 responsive to that request. And I look forward to  
16 working with you this year as well. Thank you.

17 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: Good afternoon, Chair  
18 and members of the committee. I'm Alvin Bragg, the  
19 District Attorney for New York County. Unlike DA  
20 Katz and McMahon, I was not a member, but I was  
21 staffer. So I also want to thank not just the  
members, but the incredible staff here at the  
Council.

I'll start with just data about Manhattan as my  
colleagues have, and it's encouraging. There's more

1  
2 work to do. But in 2025, total index crime in  
3 Manhattan was down four percent from 2024, and down  
4 13 percent from 2022 which outpaces the citywide  
5 decreases. The data on violent crime is particularly  
6 encouraging. Homicides are down almost 50 percent  
7 compared to four years ago.

8 Last year, the 53 homicides reported in Manhattan  
9 were 22 fewer than in 2024 and on par with  
10 pre-pandemic levels. We're encouraged thus far to  
11 see that trend continuing this year with three  
12 homicides in the borough as of March 15th compared to  
13 nine.

14 The data on shootings is very encouraging, almost  
15 a 70 percent decrease in shootings in Manhattan since  
16 2021, the last four years. Shooting incidents were  
17 down 38 percent in 2025 compared to 2024, and  
18 notably, if you compare it to the pre-pandemic  
19 levels, we're down 25 percent in shootings compared  
20 to the pre-pandemic levels of 2019. District  
21 Attorney Gonzalez mentioned East New York. He and I  
often compare notes. I grew up in Central Harlem  
which historically is the part of the borough with  
the most violence. I still live there. We see the

1  
2 benefits of this progress, but we have a lot more  
3 work to do.

4 I wanted to highlight three areas of our work and  
5 then specifically highlight some of the asks in the  
6 written testimony. The first is hate crimes, and it  
7 comes with a very big thank you which is a recurring  
8 theme from Manhattan to this Council. A few years  
9 ago we requested and were given \$1.7 million by the  
10 Council to expand our Hate Crimes Unit. We went from  
11 two to 15 specially-trained prosecutors. We hired  
12 new investigators and new analysts. We expanded our  
13 community outreach. The funding that you provided us  
14 has helped our Survivor Services Bureau, hire and  
15 retain victim service advocates with cultural  
16 competency to assist the Jewish, AAPI, Muslim, and  
17 LGBTQ communities.

18 We're profoundly grateful for that money and the  
19 funding to the work. We're encouraged that Manhattan  
20 reported hate crimes were down 30 percent in 2025  
21 compared to 2024. We know it's an under-reported  
crime. We will continue to do the outreach and  
continue to support, but I wanted to thank the  
Council and report back on what we've been doing with  
the funding you provided.

1  
2 Second, retail theft- again, the numbers are  
3 heading in the right direction in Manhattan, but  
4 there's more work to do. Retail theft complaints  
5 were down 11 percent in 2025 compared to 2024. This  
6 is in part due to the work of our Manhattan Small  
7 Business Alliance. We've brought together small  
8 business owners, BIDs, law enforcement, and service  
9 providers to target our efforts.

10 We've zeroed in on those who are doing this  
11 conduct over and over with a focused deterrent  
12 strategy, and then 2025, we prosecuted 6,700  
13 misdemeanor retail cases and another 1,800 felony  
14 retail cases. We're getting people into meaningful  
15 treatment for drug and mental health issues through  
16 our Pathways to Public Safety Division when  
17 appropriate, and where appropriate we're seeking  
18 incarceration.

19 In addition to sort of this day-in/day-out work,  
20 we're also following the money. DA Katz talked about  
21 work she's doing in Queens. Similarly in Manhattan,  
we're actually scheduled to go to trial shortly this  
year on a case against a brother and sister tandem  
that were- we allege operating a fencing operation

1  
2 with approximately \$1 million in stolen goods. So,  
3 that complements our approach to retail theft.

4 Third, worker and tenant protection, and again  
5 this comes with a very, very big thank you. Funding  
6 from the Council helped us start our Worker  
7 Protection Unit and helps us continue to stand up for  
8 hardworking New Yorkers and hold accountable  
9 companies that are lining their pockets at the  
10 expense of employees.

11 So, just to report back, in 2025 indictments  
12 resulted in nearly \$600,000 being returned to 22  
13 workers from unscrupulous employers. We were also  
14 able to return over \$1.4 million to the New York  
15 State Insurance Fund through eight cases prosecuting  
16 companies that defrauded the fund by failing to pay  
17 proper workers compensation insurance premiums.

18 We all know about the affordable housing crisis  
19 in the city and in Manhattan, and our Tenant  
20 Protection Unit has been focusing on criminal  
21 misconduct by landlords. The cases we've brought  
include charges for abusing governmental affordable  
housing programs like 421A, tenant harassment, deed  
fraud, and rental scams. Just by way of one example,  
we indicted and are prosecuting Daniel Phillam [sp?]

1  
2 and his companies for multiple counts of harassment  
3 of rent regulated tenant in the first degree, and  
4 we'll continue this important work with your support.

5 Now, I just- I want to sort of just raise up from  
6 the written testimony three specific asks. One  
7 relates to our domestic violence work and our Special  
8 Victims Division. As I think we all know, domestic  
9 violence is among the most common- among one of the  
10 most common crimes in New York City in the nation.

11 Yet, it is still under-reported. When I took office,  
12 I created the Special Victims Division which houses  
13 our Intimate Partner and Special Violence Bureau.  
14 And again, I want to thank the Council for providing  
15 funding for our Survivor Services Bureau.

16 That work is so essential to all that we do, but  
17 in particular our domestic violence and intimate  
18 partner violence work. Just to put some numbers on  
19 this- in New York City, domestic violence comprises  
20 about 40 percent of all felony crimes. As of March  
21 12th of this year in Manhattan we have more than  
1,600 intimate partner violence cases pending,  
including about 500 felony intimate partner violence  
cases.

1  
2 And again, we know there's under-reporting in  
3 this area. We know that there's a lot more to do in  
4 terms of outreach. One strategy that we've piloted  
5 and we'd like additional funding to expand is our  
6 Early Engagement Team. We've identified- we are  
7 identifying lower level intimate partner violence  
8 offenses that could signal a high risk of escalation  
9 to more serious violence, and then responding to  
10 these high-risk situations with urgency and  
11 appropriate resources including a team of  
12 prosecutors, analysts, investigators, and victim  
13 advocates working closely with the NYPD to review  
14 domestic incident reports before there's even an  
15 arrest.

16 That team works to connect with survivors and  
17 provide support and resources, and at the same time  
18 we are investigating alongside the NYPD. We've  
19 piloted it. We'd like to expand it. We need  
20 additional resources for our Special Victims Division  
21 to support that work. So that's one additional ask.

18 Second relates to mental health and the work of  
19 our Pathways Division which has been focused on this,  
20 and I think we all know the brokenness of our mental  
21 health system. If you go to probably any of our

1  
2 criminal courts, but I'll speak for Manhattan, you'll  
3 see that on full display. I'm proud to continue  
4 though in the success of our Pathways to Public  
5 Safety Division which again this Council has helped  
6 support.

7 Those prosecutors are proactively screening all  
8 of our street crime cases, felony cases in 48 hours  
9 of arraignment and reviewing thousands of misdemeanor  
10 cases each year. Cases considered are reviewed  
11 individually and holistically in conjunction with  
12 independent clinical records. With the creation of  
13 the division, my office has more than doubled felony  
14 problem-solving court referrals. Close to a quarter  
15 of our indicted felony defendants in Manhattan  
16 awaiting a felony disposition on track to take a plea  
17 at one of the four felony problem-solving courts.  
18 And our record of success is clear based on  
19 encouraging data to date, shows lower recidivism  
20 rates than when compared with other approaches and  
21 it's making Manhattan safer. And while- so we  
request more money to sort of continue to expand that  
work for ourselves, and then while it's not  
particularly a funding request for us, we can't do  
this work without the support of the ecosystem.

1  
2       So, we are also- we'd love to see ATI programming  
3 funded. ,It would not be funds to our offices, but to  
4 the service providers in the space, because without  
5 them we can't do the work.

6       The third and final request that I would mention  
7 is two programs which we call the Navigator Programs  
8 in our office. One is a \$6 million project that  
9 we're funded through our asset forfeiture funds. Our  
10 partners The Bridge, social service outreach program,  
11 these neighborhood navigators are currently operating  
12 in several high needs across Manhattan. They go out.  
13 They cross the street on a cold day like today and  
14 engage with people who, you know, many of us would  
15 cross the street away from. They build rapport.  
16 Many of them themselves have been unhoused or  
17 justice-involved, and they're connecting with people  
18 and ultimately doing things like connecting with the  
19 housing.

20       So, we again have seen that work.

21       We funded that out of forfeiture funds. We would  
love- I don't want to say we love. We need funding  
from the city to continue that important work which  
helps keeps us safe.

1  
2 In the same vein, and lastly, we invested \$3  
3 million in a similar initiative, the Court-Based  
4 Navigators Program which we've done in partnership  
5 with the Fortune Society. \$3 million from our  
6 forfeiture funds funding the Fortune Society which I  
7 think we all know the work they do. These  
8 navigators, again, folks with lived experience stand  
9 in the back of the court room and they ask us a  
10 simple question when people leave arraignments, what  
11 do you need? Sometimes that's food. Sometimes it's  
12 other forms of connections, and sometimes it's  
13 housing, and they literally have a car parked right  
14 in front of our office, can take you straight from  
15 arraignment to wraparound housing under Fortune's  
16 supportive eye.

17 Again, that's something that we funded out of our  
18 budget, \$3 million out of our forfeiture funds I  
19 should say, and we think it's something that should  
20 be scaled up and continued and indeed is vital for  
21 the continued public safety of Manhattan.

22 So, I'll leave it there and refer you to my  
23 written testimony. I thank you so much for your time  
24 and for all of your support, and look forward to  
25 continued support. Thank you so much.

1  
2 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: Good  
3 afternoon. Thank you all very much. It's so nice to  
4 see you again, Chair Feliz, and it's really  
5 encouraging to see so many of the City Council  
6 Members here today.

7 I'm Bridget Brennan and I'm the New York City  
8 Special Narcotics Prosecutor. I do and have for many  
9 years respected the work of this Council. I know  
10 when I meet with you how much you care about your  
11 constituents and how well-versed you are in the  
12 problems of your areas, and I will tell you that our  
13 door is always open to you. If you have special  
14 concerns that you would like to discuss, please reach  
15 out. We're always happy to talk and try to figure  
16 out a solution.

17 Now, what I'd like to do today is discuss general  
18 issues about our office and then end with some  
19 specific asks. The office has been a leader in  
20 citywide efforts to confront the deadly opioid  
21 epidemic for more than 50 years, and we are  
22 recognized nationwide for our expertise. We were  
23 also one of the first offices in the city to embrace  
24 alternative to incarceration programs, and you'll see  
25 that's one area where I'm looking for expansion.

1  
2 Back about in the late 1980s and 90s, Brooklyn was  
3 leading the way in that area, and we were right  
4 alongside them.

5 Here's some quick information about my office for  
6 those of you who may not be very familiar with it.  
7 We prosecute felony narcotics crimes and related  
8 crimes throughout all five boroughs. We were  
9 established more than 50 years ago, and we focus on  
10 fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, and similar lethal drugs,  
11 as well as the crimes committed in conjunction with  
12 the possession and distribution of those drugs. We  
13 work with the NYPD, the DEA. We work with other  
14 state agencies. New York City is a central area for  
15 the distribution of high levels of narcotics  
16 substance throughout the east coast as well as  
17 throughout the state.

18 I'm appointed by the five elected DAs. All my  
19 bosses are sitting here today, and they oversee our  
20 office. Our Assistant District Attorneys are members  
21 of one of the five offices. And our office has been  
a leader in citywide efforts to confront the deadly  
opioid epidemic and is recognized nationwide for our  
expertise in conducting sophisticated narcotics  
investigations.

1  
2 Now, I'd like to start out with some good news.  
3 After years of record-high fatal overdoses in New  
4 York City, they have dropped sharply over the past  
5 two years. In 2024, overdose deaths in New York City  
6 decreased by about one-third, totalling a little over  
7 2,000. Following consecutive years of more than  
8 3,000 deaths. By working together with the five DAs,  
9 other law enforcement, the New York City Health  
10 Department, treatment providers, educators, and civic  
11 leaders like yourselves, we've achieved a sustained  
12 decrease in drug-related fatalities.

13 As someone who has worked in this area for  
14 decades, I can attest that the fentanyl epidemic is  
15 the worst we've ever seen, and that collaboration  
16 among all those involved in addressing every aspect  
17 of the epidemic was the best I have ever seen. We  
18 know that drug use and addiction issues are complex  
19 with a tremendous impact on families, neighborhoods  
20 and communities.

21 Over the past three decades we've also learned  
that it takes commitment, education, treatment, and a  
broad range of expertise and resources to rein in an  
epidemic. We all agree that law enforcement is but  
one tool in our efforts to address this problem and

1  
2 that it can be used as leverage to help those with  
3 substance use issues access other resources.

4 In our submitted written testimony, you will see  
5 examples of the cases we bring, including against  
6 major narcotics traffickers and those engaged in  
7 violence or who endanger communities across the city.  
8 The number of guns now being seized in our narcotics  
9 investigations is very large, and it's different than  
10 we've previously seen. We are seeing drug sellers  
11 offering suispante [sp?], to sell guns to their  
12 customers. We are seizing guns in places that we  
13 historically have not seized guns, like, shops that  
14 are set up to package fentanyl or package cocaine.  
15 Historically we've not seized guns there and now we  
16 are. We're seizing lots of them, too. And if you  
17 look through our submitted testimony, you'll see that  
18 reflected in the summaries of our cases.

19 We prioritize drug cases with guns for obvious  
20 reasons, and I look forward to collaborating with you  
21 to promote the health and safety in our communities  
and fairness in our criminal justice system.

Again, I'm always happy to talk about specific  
concerns. And well, overdose deaths are no longer at  
record-high levels, we're not out of the woods. New

1  
2 York City's drug market is more unpredictable than  
3 ever before. We continually identify new synthetic  
4 substances mixed in with fentanyl, heroin and cocaine  
5 when we recover drugs during investigations, and some  
6 of these mixtures originate in Mexico, while others  
7 are combined here in the city in drug packaging mills  
8 or in pill press factories.

9 Although our outlook has improved, we continue to  
10 expand our education and outreach. Warning, there is  
11 no truth in advertising when it comes to drug  
12 dealers.

13 Sadly, many drug users have perished when the  
14 drug they ingested was far more deadly than the one  
15 they thought they were purchasing. Extremely potent  
16 opioid drugs like carfentanil and other fentanyl  
17 variations increase the risk of overdoses, and we  
18 continue to find them either in the packaging  
19 operations or in the drugs that are seized.

20 An array of non-opioid sedatives like the legal  
21 animal tranquilizers xylazine and medetomidine may be  
lethal or cause significant harm when mixed with  
illegal drugs, and we are finding them mixed with  
illegal drugs.

1  
2 Whether addressing local crime or high-level  
3 international narcotics operation, our office takes a  
4 holistic approach bringing prosecutions. We not only  
5 focus on crime control. We try to restore a sense of  
6 security to communities.

7 After strategic enforcement has cleared rampant  
8 drug dealing and open drug use from neighborhoods, in  
9 the neighborhoods where we're concentrating our  
10 efforts, we've used asset forfeiture funds or money  
11 designated by the City Council for this purpose to  
12 support safe recreational spaces in neighborhoods  
13 where the enforcement has been concentrated.

14 We also dedicate substantial resources to  
15 educating the public about the lethal drug market.  
16 Our educational outreach efforts touch thousands of  
17 young people, parents, teachers, and seniors. For  
18 many years before we started our own outreach, I had  
19 continually urged the Board of Ed and the Health  
20 Department to try to reach out particularly to young  
21 people and talk about our dangerous drug supply, and  
they have many other tasks and they didn't get to it.  
And so with the oversight of the Board of Ed and  
input from the Health Department, we put together our  
own program which has been approved by them. And in

1  
2 2025, SNP staff offered fentanyl awareness  
3 presentation to 96 classes in New York City schools,  
4 reaching over 6,500 middle school, high school and  
5 college students.

6 And if all works out as we hope, each one of  
7 those 6,500 people will be sharing some information  
8 with others. Staff also presented to more than a  
9 dozen group sessions for faculty, parents and  
10 seniors, reaching hundreds of additional community  
11 members. And in case you are unaware, there is a  
12 very high overdose rate among seniors. It may be  
13 due to weakened condition and long-term addiction  
14 issues, or it may be due to purchasing dangerous  
15 drugs that they think are prescription drugs online,  
16 and we educate the seniors about that.

17 In fact, we've done programs with the DAs offices  
18 who are covering thefts and embezzlements that target  
19 seniors and we talk to them about this danger. I  
20 encourage you to review our written testimony. It  
21 reflects the complexities and importance of our work,  
and you can see with your own eyes the volume and  
variety of lethal drugs seized, the numbers of guns,  
the widespread locations, the pill press equipment  
used to make deadly drugs look like medicine. These

1  
2 are some of the challenges that we face and that you  
3 are facing and your constituents are facing.

4 Now, I will describe our funding needs that were  
5 not addressed in the Mayor's proposed budget. I  
6 appreciate that the Mayor's budget did not cut our  
7 funding at all, but there are things that we need  
8 that I'd like to call to your attention. We asked  
9 for but did not receive additional funding for  
10 alternative to incarceration expansion, a crypto  
11 currency laundering prosecution unit, and discovery  
12 compliance and litigation.

13 With regard to the Alternative to Incarceration  
14 Unit, we're looking to support and expand it. Now,  
15 with- in that sense, we've had ATI programming for a  
16 long time, but there's a particular program called  
17 ATI which has been very successful, and we offered  
18 the defendants access to this for a while and it's  
19 very popular.

20 And the number of people who are interested in it  
21 is backing up our ability to screen them and offer  
them treatment. As you might well imagine, what  
often happens with someone is in that queue waiting  
for assessment and they've been charged with a lower  
level narcotic crime, they commit another lower level

1  
2 narcotic crime, and what we're trying to do is speed  
3 up that process so we can get people into treatment  
4 more quickly.

5 We have more information about that ask in our  
6 testimony. But I really hope you'll give serious  
7 consideration to approving additional funding for  
8 that, for our own staffing issues, because we've had  
9 to expand our staff in order to accommodate this.

10 In addition, we collaborate with the Centers for  
11 Justice Innovation who actually conduct these  
12 assessments and coordinate the placement and oversee  
13 this. And again, if we're going to get additional  
14 funding, they're going to need additional funding.  
15 And this is- we use this as a conduit to them to help  
16 them with their funding needs.

17 Another one of our needs is an increase in  
18 funding for discovery. We have requested funds and  
19 it's listed in our testimony the exact amount. Our  
20 office has not received the same level of financial  
21 assistance from the city and the state over the past  
few years as the District Attorney's offices  
statewide. And it's understandable the District  
Attorney's offices have a wide array of cases, many

1  
2 of them involving victims and have really struggled  
3 with it as we have.

4 We need more money, because we really don't have  
5 the funds we need to keep up with our case load. So,  
6 you'll see that we're requesting slightly \$2 million,  
7 \$2.2 million from the city which includes \$552,000 to  
8 expand our Discovery Litigation Unit with two  
9 additional ADAs and Discovery Litigation Specialists  
10 and to cover associated overhead costs. And you've  
11 asked some questions about our use of pre-existing  
12 funding. Do you want me to address or wait until the  
13 discussion period later?

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: I think we have questions  
15 regarding that for everybody, so maybe that part we  
16 can-

17 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: Okay, I'll  
18 hold off on that then. So, thank you very much.  
19 Again, thank you for your dedication. Thank you for  
20 your support of our office, and remember, we look  
21 forward to working with you if you have specific  
concerns you'd like to discuss with us. Thank you  
very much.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so much  
everyone for your testimony. Also thank you for

1  
2 being here and for all the work you do on the issue  
3 of safety. We have many questions about many topics  
4 including funding, discovery, re-entry programs,  
5 alternatives to incarceration programs, so we'll get  
6 to that. But before that, I just want to recognize  
7 that we were joined by Council Member Banks. He  
8 needed to leave for another hearing, but also joined  
9 by Council Member Cabán and Gutiérrez who have joined  
10 after.

11 A few questions for- the first question is for  
12 the DAs and also we have a six person panel. If we  
13 could just keep the answers to more or less a minute  
14 just to make sure we could cover as many topics as  
15 possible. We have many members who have a lot of  
16 questions.

17 So, the first question is for the DAs. You know,  
18 many of you said it perfect, we have to spend money  
19 on tools that will keep people out of the system.  
20 You spend money on people that will keep- systems  
21 that will keep people out of the jail system. If  
we're prosecuting and they're going back to the  
system, then we're not making any progress, then  
that's obviously not a good system.

1  
2           So, my first question for all the District  
3 Attorneys and also the Narcotics Prosecutor, if there  
4 are any programs that you think would also work. Can  
5 you list any alternatives to incarceration programs?  
6 I'll call them ATIs- re-entry programs or violence  
7 prevention programs that you've worked with and  
8 you've seen as most effective? If you could just  
9 list out the top two programs that you've seen as  
10 most-effective.

11           Also, how costly are they, and also is there room  
12 for expansion currently? Maybe, and I guess for all  
13 the questions, we'll start from the Bronx DA or we  
14 could start- whatever you all decide.

15           DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Of course. Thank you,  
16 Mr. Chairman. There are a number of ways that we  
17 handle trying to keep people out of the criminal  
18 justice system or once they enter to do intervention.  
19 I have a Community Justice Bureau just for that. It  
20 used to be called the Alternatives to Incarceration  
21 Bureau, but it's more than just incarceration. It's  
really trying to make people whole and it's about  
trying to get people on the right track so that they-  
although they come into the system, that they  
hopefully will not reoffend.

1  
2           So, we do a number of things with that. One of  
3 the programs that I developed or started in my office  
4 had to do with guns and it was a gun diversion  
5 program that we call the Bronx Gun Diversion  
6 initiative, or BGAP. It's the Bronx Gun and  
7 Accountability Program that we do with the Osborne  
8 Association as well as with the Fortune Society.

9           I guess it's now five years ago that we started  
10 that program in order- I saw that there were  
11 first-time gun offenders that were coming into a  
12 system. For various reasons people are carrying  
13 guns, and in the Bronx, you know, in particular,  
14 there's some tough neighborhoods.

15           People suffer with trauma, things of that nature.  
16 And we developed a one-year program for these  
17 first-time gun offenders that they go through this  
18 program. And I spoke about it, you know, a lot of  
19 the other similar ones.

20           They go through treatment, trauma therapy, job  
21 readiness, all of those things, and we've seen the  
success of this program, and it's in my written  
testimony. The Fortune- through Osborne I think we  
had over- we've had like 110 people, Fortune, 117,

1  
2 and we've had 80 percent compliance and success and  
3 we haven't seen people come back.

4 So, that's one of the things that we have. A  
5 newer program that we have in-house is something  
6 called Bronx Assist, and that is for cases of  
7 pre-arraignment diversion program, meaning when  
8 people are arrested for low-level, non-violent cases  
9 where they're going to get a desk appearance ticket,  
10 normally those cases, they go into the precincts, and  
11 then you have to go to court some 20, 30 days later.  
12 At that point, it's too late in order to deal with  
13 whatever crisis that person is going through.

14 So, under Bronx Assist now we started with a  
15 pilot project in the 44th precinct that connects  
16 individuals that are arrested to immediate, you know,  
17 services that they may need, whatever the service is,  
18 the housing, food insecurity, job, whatever,  
19 substance use disorder. We connect them right there  
20 in the precinct with people who have lived experience  
21 in order to give them that connection or that  
engagement. That is new. You know, we started it  
with a small grant that we received from the federal  
government. It's early on in it, but we've seen 100

1  
2 percent participation and people are actually  
3 engaging and listening to the services.

4 It remains to be seen whether or not they come  
5 back, but this is something where previously with a  
6 desk appearance ticket, people would just get it. No  
7 offering of programs at all. Some 20 days later they  
8 don't even come back to court. So we never know if  
9 they got anything.

10 So this is a way of connecting with the right,  
11 you know, as it happens. Then of course, we have  
12 Project Reset at this- this Council has done. It's a  
13 Restorative Justice program as well for misdemeanors,  
14 community volunteers, that help with that to help  
15 those people who are impacted and for them to make  
16 amends.

17 So, those are- you know, those are just some of  
18 the programs that we have now. The gun diversion and  
19 then the ones that we talked about now, where we  
20 receive money from the state for Bronx Restore which  
21 is similar to the one that they had in Brooklyn that  
we've really seen results and we're happy to receive  
money for that as well.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Thank you for that  
question, Councilman, because it really is sort of at

1  
2 the essence of so much of the work that we're trying  
3 to do to reduce once a crime is committed. We want  
4 to prevent a crime, you know, from the get-go, but  
5 once it's committed, as much as we can divert or  
6 through alternatives to incarceration, we do.

7 One sort of Staten Island story that we're very  
8 proud of is what we call our Hope Program which began  
9 almost 10 years ago. When we were in the throes of  
10 one of the worst opioid epidemics driven by fentanyl  
11 of anywhere in the country, the death rates were per  
12 100,000 as high as anywhere in the city, anywhere in  
13 the country.

14 And the idea behind the Hope Program is- and  
15 piggybacking on what DA Clark said, is that someone  
16 would be met at the precinct by a peer navigator at  
17 the moment of arrest even before booking and given an  
18 offer of a diversion program that would be tailored  
19 just for them if they agreed to meaningfully engage  
20 for 30 days- the case would be dismissed, and that  
21 program has expanded. Now the offers are made not  
only at arrest, but also at arraignment or return on  
the DAT and the types of programs all grow from that.  
And we've seen thousands of Staten Islanders who have  
accepted those offers, who have followed what was

1  
2 prescribed for them, individually tailored by  
3 programs and by peer navigators who would work with  
4 them, and they've been successful.

5       So, I would say to you that when you're thinking  
6 about these things, the elements that have to be  
7 there is when is the offer given, when is the  
8 intervention? Can it be as soon as possible?  
9 Because what had been happening is under the old drug  
10 treatment court models, the offers would be made at  
11 the time of plea or conviction, so way down the road  
12 of the legal process, and in the meantime, the  
13 individuals if they were out they would continue to  
14 use and possibly die.

15       So, when is the intervention made- offer made?  
16 How specific is the program for the individual? How  
17 much is the follow-up to make sure that the  
18 individual is following through, and are there  
19 programs available to connect the person to? And  
20 what we're seeing in many instances, especially in  
21 Staten Island is we don't have the programs to  
connect people to.

22       So, you hear programs like Fortune Society and  
23 Osborne, they're not even present in Staten Island,  
24 so we don't have those programs. But my colleagues

1  
2 would say the same thing. Whether it's addiction  
3 illness, whether it's mental health, whether it's  
4 poverty, whether it's family trauma, whatever the  
5 issue is that's driving the behavior, we don't have  
6 the resources.

7 So I recently had a young man who we were able to  
8 put together a plea on three cases, two misdemeanors  
9 and one felony assault, and we were prepared to put  
10 him- give him a plea that would allow him to resolve  
11 the legal cases and go into a mental health  
12 residential facility, and we couldn't find one, and  
13 he has now literally been lost to the system. He was  
14 supposed to appear at a location to be admitted into  
15 a program.

16 When he showed up, they said they had no- there  
17 was no room at the inn for him. He was rejected.  
18 We've lost him now, and now there's a bench warrant  
19 for his arrest. So the system is failing because we  
20 don't have the programs. So where do we put them?  
21 So, when do we intervene and where can we have people  
go are the issues that have to be addressed.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Thank you for that  
question. In Brooklyn, our approach to public safety  
has always been rooted in diversion, and alternatives

1  
2 to incarceration. You know, Brooklyn, in fact, had  
3 the widest number of alternatives to incarceration.  
4 We had the first drug treatment court that was  
5 established, the first mental health court, a veteran  
6 court. You know, we were the first District  
7 Attorney's office to offer gun diversion programs.  
8 We had the first pre-arraignment diversion program in  
9 the city, and we were the first county to offer  
10 Restorative Justice including an organization that we  
11 work with, Common Justice, Circles for Safe Streets  
12 that dealt with vehicular violence.

13 So we've been innovative in that work, and we  
14 work with a lot of partners, and I don't want to  
15 forget people, but we work with a lot of outside  
16 organizations, Exalt and Fortune and CJI and EAC, of  
17 course Safe Horizons, and a lot of domestic violence  
18 work. We work with a lot of our violence  
19 interrupters, and Brooklyn was the first District  
20 Attorney's office to really lean into credible  
21 messengers and violence intervention work, and we  
work with VIVO [sic] and many other organizations,  
Project Echo, Man Up [sic], just so many of our  
violence interrupter organizations that we work with.

1  
2 I think they do a tremendous job in helping to reduce  
3 violence in their county.

4 I know that Council Member Hanks had the ability  
5 to visit our mental health court. I still think it's  
6 the best in the state, and I spoke to Chair Feliz  
7 about visiting that court as well. And I think the-  
8 you know, what we're seeing in the county in terms of  
9 violence reduction is because these programs help  
10 deal with cause issues and do that. And I am proud  
11 to say that our population on Rikers Island from  
12 Brooklyn has come down about 200 less people on the  
13 island than there were at this point last year, and  
14 you know, having these resources to refer cases to  
15 and work with is a big part of that.

16 I mean, we also try cases in the county for sure,  
17 but you have to have these programming. And I know  
18 that my colleague Alvin Bragg also encouraged the  
19 Council to support many of the organizations who do  
20 this tremendous work, you know, with our offices.  
21 You know, the District Attorneys offices, although we  
do have our own programs, we have programs in our  
office.

Without funding for these organizations to handle  
these- you know, their clients and our defendants,

1  
2 this work would not be- this alternative to  
3 incarceration work would not continue. So, I just  
4 say that, you know, we've been really on the  
5 forefront of trying to figure out different ways of  
6 handling cases, and again, I want to thank this City  
7 Council, because again, Project Restore was something  
8 that happened because of the City Council and the  
9 Mayor's Office believing in us three years ago that  
10 there was a better way to deal with young men who are  
likely to be involved in gun violence than simply  
building cases to incarcerate them.

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12 So, I'm going to look at your question on two levels,  
13 right? So, one is the youth programming and keeping  
14 people out of the criminal justice system to begin  
15 with, but the next one is the ATIs, Alternatives to  
16 Incarceration, and the work we're doing in that  
space.

17 So, we have a very active in-house youth program,  
18 Legal Explorers program, Student Advisory Council,  
19 leadership programs for junior high school and high  
school, summer youth employment.

20 We also have a hope and leadership academy that  
21 goes out to all- to the schools and they've spoken to

1 over 10,000 kids on different issues when requested.  
2 We also have a very active- oh, and by the way, on  
3 our website [queensda.org](http://queensda.org), there is an interactive  
4 community partnership program illustrated and it's  
5 interactive. So, you can go to any community and you  
6 can see in Queens County how many times our office  
7 has gone out to that community and different issues  
8 dealing with community partnership.

9 Diversion, though, and ATIs are a very strong  
10 part of what we do. We also utilize Project Reset  
11 very actively. Since its inception, we've had 1,800-  
12 I'm trying to talk fast for the benefit of everybody.  
13 We've had 1,857 cases referred to diversion programs  
14 from Project Reset. That is before arraignments and  
15 1,062 people have successfully completed the program.  
16 In 2025 alone, it was 556 cases referred and 333  
17 cases that were completed. We also have very active  
18 treatment courts.

19 So, about- depending on the day of the week, it's  
20 almost about 600 cases that are in our treatment  
21 courts. Those are Queens Treatment Court, Veterans  
Court, mental health court, drug diversion, and human  
trafficking, mental health, all of those diversion  
courts are heavily utilized. We work mostly with a

1 lot of the different groups throughout the City of  
2 New York. One of the most prevalent groups we work  
3 with is clearly the project- the Fortune Society.

4 We do our gun diversion program and many other  
5 programs through the Fortune Society. But you know,  
6 we take an approach that it's two ways, keeping  
7 people out, and then once they're involved in the  
8 system, how we can help make sure that they don't  
9 return, because that's really the end goal is that  
people don't return to the system.

10 So, just so you know, we vet also every  
11 first-time arrest for DAT's. We vet them for mental  
12 health, drug addiction, and ways that we can also  
13 help make sure they don't come back, again, into the  
criminal justice system.

14 So, thank you for the question. I'm happy to  
15 answer anything else.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: Thank you, Chair. So  
17 we have four problem-solving courts in Manhattan,  
18 veterans mental health, statutory drug court, and an  
19 omnibus felony alternative to incarceration court.  
20 In my testimony I mentioned that we are vetting  
21 within the first 48 hours eligibility being sort of-  
you know, can we do it safely for our problem-solving

1 courts, and we now have more than 25 percent of our  
2 indicted felony cases in one of those courts,  
3 doubling our referrals.

4 A focus on the felony Alternatives to  
5 Incarceration Court because I think it's unlike any  
6 other. It's an omnibus court. There's no sort of  
7 restriction on the type of case that can come in  
8 under the oversight of our Chief Judge Bivan [sp?],  
9 and the results have been very, very encouraging.  
10 Our provider in that court is CJI, the Center for  
11 Justice Innovation, and I guess I will just tie this  
12 back to my ask. We are at capacity and I think I can  
13 speak not just for my office, but for CJI, and I  
14 would also- I don't want be presumptuous, but I think  
15 the courts would also say it as well, the OCA, the  
16 annual report that just came out for the Office of  
17 Court Administration, Chief Judge Bivan, Chief Judge  
18 of our court, is on the cover. It talks about  
19 problem-solving courts as a priority. We are at  
20 capacity in Manhattan. We would like to do more, but  
21 without resources we can't.

SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: I'll just  
echo what DA Bragg said. We are having the same  
issue with the same court we participate in. So, CJI

1  
2 is at capacity which means we're at capacity. And if  
3 you're asking for specific recommendations on  
4 specific programs, is that your ask? Programs or  
5 actual providers?

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: I guess both, and also, I  
7 guess learn about the programs that you've worked  
8 with that have had a lot of successes.

9 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: Okay.  
10 Because if you're asking for specific  
11 recommendations, we work with it probably a total of  
12 50, you know- through- over the last few years,  
13 depending on what the individual needs are of the  
14 person. Anyways, so I won't go through that list.  
15 But we also, beyond the ATI court, we have drug  
16 court. We still have a DTAP program. We- since the  
17 beginning days when defendants who are charged with  
18 felony offenses would have to go into a residential  
19 treatment program, we've come a long distance, and so  
20 we have a wide variety of programs offered mostly  
21 through ATI, although we still have a drug court and  
a DTAP program.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you so much  
20 for the information. So, I have many more questions,  
21 but my colleagues have questions as well. So, I'll

1  
2 pause for now. I'll pass it on to Council Member  
3 Hanks for her questions. Also, just going to  
4 respectfully ask if we could keep the answers to no  
5 more than a minute just to make sure we could cover  
6 as much substance. We have a six-person panel.  
Thank you so much.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you so much, Chair.  
8 My remarks are more of a statement and a few  
9 questions for my own DA. But definitely, good  
10 afternoon, and I really thank all the DAs throughout  
11 the city for coming in and testifying and advocating  
12 for your respective boroughs. And while I really  
13 appreciate the tremendous need. As a Staten Islander  
14 I just believe it's staggering that in FY 2027 our  
15 prosecutor's budget of \$654 million- Staten Island  
only represents four percent of that budget number,  
and that's four percent.

16 And so, I just wanted to utilize this moment to  
17 thank our DA and the staff at the Richmond County  
18 District Attorneys Office for really doing a great  
19 job despite the obvious and deep financial  
20 disparities in comparison. Like I said, we're only  
21 six percent of the population, but you know, the  
budget really doesn't really reflect that. So, my

1  
2 questions are for the DA. Given the fact that Staten  
3 Island receives the smallest allocation, how do you  
4 feel that affects our capacity to address our  
5 budget's most basic, you know, safety needs?

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Thank you for that  
7 question, Council Member, and thanks for your  
8 advocacy. We have been lower- we've been less than  
9 three percent. So, we have fought our way a little  
10 bit back, but it is still dramatic. I would if I  
11 also could point out, I think your documents there  
12 might be a typographical error. It seems to indicate  
13 that our budget- I'm looking at the financial analyst  
14 there. It seems to indicate that our budget is \$52  
15 million, but it's actually \$20 million less than  
16 that. It's about \$31 million, so it's less, yeah.

17 And then to answer your question there are just  
18 some things that we cannot do in Staten Island that  
19 our colleagues can. Although, as you hear from them,  
20 they are strapped for resources as well, especially  
21 on that alternative to incarceration and diversion  
22 aspect.

23 If we had more programs, we could be more  
24 effective in that space, especially in the mental  
25 health area, and I urge this Council as you consider

1  
2 that issue on a citywide- its citywide impact to  
3 think in the criminal justice space that there are  
4 many individuals who if we could connect them to  
5 mental health treatment, it would go a long way to  
6 make the city safer and get those individuals to a  
7 better place.

8 One big space that we fall short in is that we  
9 don't have a physical location for that programming,  
10 for people to go to what we called it- now it's  
11 called a Community Justice Court or Community Justice  
12 Center. Not having that means that Staten Islanders  
13 are not served by a lot of the organizations that you  
14 hear talked about here who get money from this  
15 Council directly like the Fortune Society or Osborne,  
16 and the list goes on and on- don't even have a  
17 presence on Staten Island. So, the Council Member  
18 mentioned reentry program. Most of the reentry money  
19 that comes from the City of New York goes to those  
20 organizations. They have no presence in Staten  
21 Island. So that means the Staten Islanders do not  
22 have that resource available to them when they are  
23 involved in the criminal justice system.

24 Then on the prosecution side, just in the areas  
25 of domestic violence and cyber security and scamming

1  
2 and all those other things we talked about, if we had  
3 equal resources we could have the personnel to better  
4 prosecute those crimes, hold people accountable and  
5 prevention.

6 So, it does affect us across the board, and we  
7 thank you very much, Madam Majority Whip, for your  
8 continued advocacy.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Well, thank you very much,  
10 and I just want to take this opportunity to thank  
11 Speaker Menin for putting to Staten Islanders on in  
12 leadership. So we are going to be part of those  
13 conversations to be able to do that. We don't want  
14 to say that for the record, so it doesn't think that  
15 we spent four years not funding our own borough. But  
16 do you have a baseline number where Staten Island  
17 would have parity with other four boroughs given the-  
18 what you've testified?

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Yeah, I do think a  
20 reflection of our population numbers- so of that  
21 total, if you talked about 5.5 to 6 percent, and you  
22 know, the additional money that we asked for in the  
23 programmatic budget I think is about \$3 million, and  
24 then of course on the capital side, the money for  
25 that Community Justice Center would go a long way.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you. So, does that  
3 budget also- the fact that we have such pay parity,  
4 parity in the budgets, does that affect discovery  
5 reform compliance?

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: It certainly does,  
7 because I didn't- we didn't go into but my colleagues  
8 have mentioned it. As you know, the continued  
9 obligation that we have to gather and collate,  
10 curate, and quickly turn over to defense all the  
11 materials involved in cases around that are not only  
12 relevant, but related and beyond, is an incredible  
13 burden both for staff, both for infrastructure.

14 My colleagues have mentioned the storage capacity  
15 and things that are needed there. So, that is a  
16 continued obligation that if we don't meet it, cases  
17 are dismissed. We made some rational adjustments to  
18 that well-intentioned law last year in Albany and so  
19 that it is- the whole process is a little bit better,  
20 but the obligation and burden on us is still great  
21 and it really does lead to burnout of staff, and it's  
where pay parity really becomes a problem.

So we continue to face the issues of retention,  
pay parity and meeting our obligation. And so the

1 funding that we all have asked for in that space  
2 would- is obviously needed.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you so much, Chair.  
4 May I have one more question? Thank you so much. So  
5 having- so how is having less technological  
6 infrastructure affected case timelines and conviction  
7 rates?

8 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Yeah, I mean, that  
9 affects us all. I look at my colleagues. It's a  
10 very good question, because I think in terms of the  
11 technical ability, the ability to store the  
12 materials, to- and as one of my colleagues said, we  
13 have to maintain these materials for 25 years. I  
14 mean, that's a state obligation.

15 And since everything is digital now and  
16 electronic, we are facing a near crisis in our office  
17 because we don't have the storage and the cost for it  
18 keeps going up. So, it's going to come to a head  
19 where we're not going to be- you know, either not  
20 meet the obligation to store, but also to process  
21 cases. It would mean that when certain cases, if we  
don't meet our obligation to gather all the material  
and turn it over in a mandated period of time, then  
the cases are dismissed. And so you could have

1 instances where victims cases, victims of violent  
2 crime, their cases are dismissed, because of some  
3 technological shortcoming or failure.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you so much. I'll  
5 be sure that I'll be advocating for our small but  
6 mighty borough in the budget negotiations. Thank you  
7 so much for coming.

8 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Thank you. We  
9 appreciate that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you all for coming  
11 here today.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Next,  
13 we'll hear from Council Member Nurse and then  
14 Encarnacion.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair. I have  
16 just targeted questions. For the Queens District  
17 Attorney, you said you've successfully recovered 21  
18 properties related to deed fraud. How many overall  
19 cases do you get- or did you get last year? Is it  
20 going up in Queens, or are we staying the same?

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: So, we had many more  
cases of deed fraud when we first started  
investigating deed frauds a few years ago. We have  
about 180 cases right now going on at the same time

1  
2 with investigations. We've gotten, if my memory  
3 serves me correctly, about 23 homes back for people  
4 over the last year and maybe two years, but it is  
5 becoming less because we are very diligent about  
6 investigating, and I think people understand that we  
7 have a whole, you know, group of folks, Bureau of  
8 Housing and Worker Protection, that are investigating  
9 these crimes. And not only that, I think it's  
10 important to note, Council Member, that we are  
11 getting houses- not only getting houses back for  
12 people, but they understand that there's some  
13 accountability for it. But we're also teaching. We  
14 go out into the community. We talk about Acris  
15 [sp?]. We talk about [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) where you can register  
16 your property so that you know when someone has taken  
17 a mortgage out on your property.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: No, I appreciate that and  
19 just because of time, so-

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: [interposing] Go ahead.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Did you say how many cases  
overall you-

DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: [interposing] It's about  
180 cases right now that-

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: 180?

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: We're either  
3 investigating, have had over the last several years  
4 were disposed of.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay.

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: I only know that because  
7 someone just asked us.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yep, no, I appreciate  
9 that. It's a big concern for us in Brooklyn, and  
10 similar to our Brooklyn District Attorney, also my  
11 community member- I know you all have done a lot of  
12 work on this. I know myself, Council Member Ossé and  
13 others have been really focused on it. Do you still-  
14 I know there was conversation about a specialized  
15 Deed Theft Unit- for Brooklyn, sorry. Do you think  
16 this is needed to specialize in these cases for  
17 District Attorneys where- I mean, specifically for  
18 Brooklyn.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Yeah.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: But if we have high cases  
21 in other places as well.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Yeah. With Brooklyn  
with the increasing value of homes, especially in  
central Brooklyn, there's been, you know, so much  
attention of people trying to figure out how to take

1  
2 advantage of homeowners and rip them off, especially  
3 a lot of those homeowners are generational families  
4 who've lived there until we- you know, the true deed  
5 owner is an older adult, and we've seen a number of  
6 scams increasing.

7 I testified, you know, just a little while ago  
8 that we would like to have that funded in our office.  
9 We have folks who work in the real estate area, but  
10 we don't have a dedicated deed fraud or a housing  
11 unit. We have two postings right now asking for  
12 lawyers to come to our office and hopefully the City  
13 Council can help fund that, because this is really  
14 specialized work. We just did a big case this past  
15 year. Got a verdict in December where a man was  
16 convicted of stealing multiple homes. A number of  
17 those homes were returned. But there's so much more  
18 work to be done, and I do-

19 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: So, just, yes, you would  
20 love that? You would love that unit?

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: I would love it, and  
it's really needed.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I'm trying. I'm trying,  
but you know, it's my District Attorney. So, I'm  
going to be a little respectful. So, the answer is

1  
2 yes. And then for the Bronx, we just had a really  
3 interesting interaction before you all came with the  
4 Police Commissioner where two members of the Bronx  
5 said- are looking at CrimeStat and saying, like,  
6 crime appears to be up in the Bronx, and it was like  
7 a 0-100 response that that's not true, and so, where  
8 are we? Like, what- you know, what we give is what  
9 we pull from public data. So, is crime up in the  
10 Bronx, or- can you set the record straight for us?

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: No, crime is up in the  
12 Bronx. Look, things have been better, but at the end  
13 of the day, even though there have been some  
14 decreases, we still lead the city in everything. So,  
15 you could tell me that crime is going down, but you  
16 can't tell that to Ms. Jackson in Concourse Village,  
17 because she don't see that when she walks to the four  
18 train to go to work and afraid that might get shot,  
19 you know, as an innocent bystander or whatever the  
20 case is.

21 So, the numbers are up because of the  
disinvestment that is happening in the Bronx. We  
still have the same neighborhoods that are not  
getting the services that they need. A lot of these  
organizations and community-based organizations that

1 do this work. I appreciate them. I ask the City  
2 Council and the Mayor to continue to fund them, but  
3 make sure that they're able to have a presence in the  
4 Bronx. Some of them don't. Some of them do. When  
5 these new initiatives come about, and I say I need  
6 resources, the City will start an initiative in  
7 Brooklyn or Manhattan and say well, they have the  
8 infrastructure. Well, we need to build the  
9 infrastructure-

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] We hear you  
10 loud and clear, and I think all of us in the Council  
11 want to support that. That's why that quest- the  
12 response to that question was so disrespectful,  
13 because it's two Bronx members who live there every  
14 day versus some really nice neighborhood in  
15 Manhattan. So, you know, I just- I really thank you  
16 for clearing that up, and we do agree-

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: [interposing] It's a  
17 reality.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And know what's going on in  
18 the Bronx.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: But you know, the  
20 people in the Bronx are still resilient.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah.

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: And we're still trying,  
3 but we need the help.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah. I have- I'll come  
5 back. You sure? Okay. I just had some questions  
6 about discovery and- sorry, not discovery, case  
7 processing and discovery. And I don't know who can  
8 answer this. I don't think everybody needs to answer  
9 it. Maybe they- we can just designate one person.  
10 But a major driver of the size of the jail population  
11 at Rikers is the length of time it takes to resolve  
12 many criminal cases, and you know, a central part of  
13 that is meeting discovery obligations, it's the  
14 technology to support those efforts.

15 Significant funding has been budgeted for your  
16 offices recently related to discovery technology and  
17 implementation. The state gave \$50 million to your  
18 offices for that technology in fiscal year 2024. In  
19 FY26 each of your offices was budgeted millions of  
20 dollars for discovery implementation.

21 In the Bronx, \$15 million for staff, supplies and  
materials- capital spending in Brooklyn \$13.4,  
Manhattan \$11.8, Queens almost \$9 million, Staten  
Island \$2.7.

1  
2 It looks like all of the money has been zeroed  
3 out in the Preliminary Budget. Can each of your  
4 offices- well, I guess you all need to respond. But  
5 can each of your offices please share the status of  
6 installing a data management system to store and  
7 transfer discovery, and really just like to the point  
8 what, you know, what's left to do?

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Well, I know- we  
10 appreciate the discovery money, and the history of it  
11 is that when those laws were changed, there was no  
12 money, right? So, now we're playing catch-up.  
13 Eventually- finally people heard us, right, that we  
14 need money or there was unfunded mandates.

15 So, we have that now. But it's still going to  
16 take some time for that to take effect. That's the  
17 problem with it. Technology costs a lot of money and  
18 it takes a lot of time to build what is really needed  
19 in our offices in order to get that material out. My  
20 office has worked diligently, my IT Department as  
21 well as working with the vendors that we have hired  
to get the work done, we're well on our way now, but  
it's going to take a little bit of time in order to  
see what the results-

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] But your  
3 vendors are done? Your systems are set in place, and  
4 now you're just kind of-

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Building, building,  
6 still in the build stage.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: That's what I mean, like  
8 the operation-

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: [interposing] Yeah,  
10 still in the build stage, because at least we have  
11 the money to build.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And not the-

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: [interposing] The thing  
14 is that- the thing is that money was a five-year  
15 lookout. We're in year three. So, it's going to run  
16 out and it's expensive. So we'll be coming back to  
17 you again and to the state in order to make sure we  
18 do our mandate. But we're all doing the best that we  
19 can in order to make sure that we comply with that.  
20 Because you know, this- these are people's lives at  
21 stake, defenders as well as our victims and the  
community at large.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: Can I just- Council  
Member Nurse, I'm sorry just to be clear. There was  
supposed to be like an organically created vendor

1  
2 that was going to build out for us and the public  
3 defenders. That has not been done yet. So, it's in  
4 the process, and some of the money has been spent,  
5 but you know, none of the- as far as I know, no, DA's  
6 office has that completely built out yet. It's all  
7 in the process. It's still ongoing and discovery  
8 still continues to delay the process.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And you all have to each  
10 pick a different, like procure your own vendor?

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: I think four of us have  
12 the same vendor, and I think Queens has a different  
13 vendor.

14 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible] Nice.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: Nice? Yeah.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Yeah, no, so there's  
17 a- yeah, there's an initiative under the way. The  
18 four offices and the Police Department are working  
19 with what's called Nice to build out the case  
20 management which will also build out the discovery  
21 retrieval collection and turn over to the defense.  
That continues to work. It's very complicated  
because they started from different systems, and they  
have to integrate with the Police Department system,  
so it's underway. In Staten Island we use a

1  
2 different system, one that is more from the statewide  
3 perspective, and so ours already operates. So we  
4 don't exactly have that same problem.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: You're up and operational  
6 with your system?

7 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: No, we're not going  
8 to use Nice. We use the system-

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] No, but I'm  
10 saying- I'm just confirming-

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: [interposing] Yeah,  
12 ours is- ours for the most part operational. We  
13 still have problems when we have to download large  
14 amounts of information, say people's cell phones, a  
15 lot of body-worn cameras. So, that physical  
16 infrastructure problem we have, but in terms of sort  
17 of that operating system platform, we have ours in  
18 place. But again, we're much smaller comparatively  
19 speaking-

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] No, I  
21 understand.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: A smaller office, and-  
but we've had one in place.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: I think that ours is  
the closest because the Bronx started first, because

1  
2 it was all- it was four offices. The Bronx started  
3 first. I actually had a meeting with them recently  
4 to find out what's the status. The build is  
5 happening. We're very close to being operational.  
6 And I know that the defenders have taken clients of  
7 the Nice system as well. So, the Legal Aid Society  
8 and I believe Bronx Defenders, also. But you know,  
9 there's always issues and things that we still have  
10 to iron out as you build it out. So, we're the  
11 closest. We've used the money. We spent about 60  
12 percent of it in order to do the build, but you know,  
13 again, like I said, it takes time.

14 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: It absolutely takes  
15 time. So, we also do not use Nice. So, two years  
16 ago we purchased a new case management system which  
17 we're still- we said we purchased, but we are  
18 building it out as well. The next year, we had a lot  
19 of IT-related expenses including firewalls, servers,  
20 storage related to the planned data center. But we  
21 are still building it out as well.

I have to tell you, I don't know what we would  
have done without that funding. Because the new  
discovery obligations were such that it was so omni-  
you know, large, that without that funding it would

1  
2 have been very difficult, but we're all building out  
3 our systems, and it's getting much better.

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: I don't have anything  
5 to add to this.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah, no, I guess it'd be  
7 good to keep track on that, and I'll yield the floor,  
8 but it just seems like from a systems perspective, if  
9 you all are trying to do the same task, I'm unclear  
10 why we don't have a unified system, you know, a  
11 Singulair vendor.

12 I'm sure there are a lot of reasons for it that  
13 we can follow up with, but it just seems like there  
14 might be some cost-savings and efficiency to have a  
15 standard system. Thank you, Chair.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so  
17 much. Alright, so next hear from Council Member  
18 Encarnacion and then Cabán then Gutiérrez, and  
19 Sanchez, and then Wong. We're a little bit behind  
20 schedule. We have CCRB waiting, so we're going to be  
21 a little bit tighter with the four-minute rule.  
Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Well, I have two DAs  
in two of my districts. No, but I'll be quick,  
because I really just want to- I've been here way too

1  
2 long. So, the Justice Centers, and I hear you Staten  
3 Island, I know that the Justice Center is something  
4 that you've been waiting for. The Bronx does have a  
5 Justice Center. It is not a physical location,  
6 though. It is not a- like, we're trying to- and I  
7 want to make sure to, you know, address that  
8 narrative, because I don't want it to be looked at as  
9 a check box, right? It isn't a check box. And I-  
10 so, from you, DA Clark, is \$2 million what you are  
11 asking for for the- in capital, for the Bronx Justice  
12 Center?

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Well, for capital there  
14 needs to be an assessment. There's a lot of issues  
15 connected to the capital. So we have a space that's  
16 dedicated. It's a HRA building. There's supposed to  
17 be a transfer to DCAS. So, you know, that's an  
18 intergovernmental thing that you all have to figure  
19 out around, right?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Yes.

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: And then once whoever  
the landlord is going to be needs to have the  
assessment done as to what that capital cost-

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: [interposing] Capital  
needs.

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Is really going to look  
3 like. I could guess and tell you I think it's going  
4 to be about \$20 million. I walked through it, right?  
5 But what do I know? And by the time it gets done  
6 it's always more money. So, the problem is we need  
7 to transfer from one agency to another, and then  
8 there needs to be the assessment of what the capital  
9 can be, and then move from there. The \$2 million is  
10 operational.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Operational.

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: So right now, CJI is-  
13 yeah, CJI is in there, right? They're working doing  
14 some of the work, but we need that baseline. So,  
15 that \$2 million they continue to operate, but the  
16 facilities need to be brought up, the outside, the  
17 inside-

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: [interposing] Yeah, I  
19 was at the walk-through.

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: So, that's what we're  
21 waiting for and that's what we're asking that the  
City do that. That doesn't necessarily come to me,  
but I want to advocate for whether it's DCAS, HRA, or  
whoever else from the city is going to maintain the  
building, because it's a city building- to do that

1  
2 assessment so that we could start getting those  
3 renovations and upgrades done.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Perfect.

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: And right. So, Staten  
6 Island- so Mike and I go through this. Like, we both  
7 say neither one of us have one, and we like really  
8 don't because it's not really- he got capital money.  
9 I got operational money, right? He needs operation  
10 and a building. I need capital to get it done. So  
11 neither one of us really have it until we get the  
12 dedicated funds.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Yeah. And the same  
14 is kind of the question for Manhattan. I know the  
15 Harlem Justice Center exists, but there's some  
16 capital needs for that building as well. Are you  
17 aware of any?

18 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: I think there are- I  
19 think the Chief Judge- I think there's a number of  
20 discussions going on. It was not asked that we had,  
21 you know, this year. Certainly we would love to have  
a physical structure. I think we would, you know,  
prioritize the ask I made in terms of expanded  
resources, CJI, but yes, there's a need.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: And the \$3 million  
3 in state funding that was for the Restore program, is  
4 that state funding? Is it-

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Yes, that came from the  
6 state.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: It is, okay,  
8 beautiful.

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: We're looking forward  
10 to putting that to use to get that done. We're in  
11 the process now of interviewing providers to see who  
12 is going to be the providers of that. There's also  
13 academic parts of it as well.

14 So, we're getting close. Final interviews are  
15 happening now. We brought down- I think we had 10  
16 vendors that applied. We've narrowed it down. We're  
17 doing the final interviews, and then hopefully we'll  
18 be able to get it working.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: Okay, perfect. And  
20 the asset forfeiture money, the \$9 million that you  
21 spoke of, is that the full ask? You're looking for  
the restoration of the \$9 million for the asset  
forfeiture money?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: So, we've started, and  
I would say in the written testimony I broke it out

1  
2 for the neighborhood navigators which is the BRID  
3 program. That's about \$2,500,000 per year to keep it  
4 up and running as it is. You know, and the  
5 court-based navigators would be about \$2 million.  
6 That's the Fortune program.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: So, \$4 total?

8 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: Yeah, \$4.5 [sic].

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: \$4 total, okay.

10 That was it. Oh, look, I made it. Alright. Should  
11 I just say Council Member Cabán?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Thank you. As well, I got  
13 two DA's also.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACION: I got you.

15 Oh, okay.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Yeah, you're across, too.  
17 Anyway, I'm standing for no other reason than I have  
18 a health condition. I want to start- well, I guess  
19 first I want to start with a little bit of a  
20 statement. I think it's obviously really important  
21 that we're strengthening the treatment courts.  
22 There's a lot of room to grow and also make some  
23 changes that would strengthen the program. I- there  
24 was some testimony about the peer navigator program.  
25 I just want to put out there on the record that I

1 think it's- I think that is a bit troublesome,  
2 because it's assuming guilt before a person even  
3 speaks to an attorney, and that's the kind of help  
4 that I think people should be getting before an  
5 arrest and not necessarily funded through a DA's  
6 office. I think if someone is arrested, then we've  
7 already failed them in servicing them. But that's  
8 just a statement I want to make for the record. It's  
9 not a question. I do want to ask and follow up on  
10 the questions that Council Member Nurse asked about  
11 some of the discovery. Obviously, you had that state  
12 appropriation, the other money that was coming in. I  
13 want to acknowledge by the way, Nice, terrible. Like  
14 it is- like, I understand that that's causing you  
15 guys a lot of problems and things that are not your  
16 fault, and it's causing the defenders problems. I  
17 also think it's obviously a really big problem when  
18 PDFs get sent to defenders that like aren't labeled.  
19 There's different information that isn't sorted in  
20 any particular way, and of course, that's causing  
21 case delays.

So I just want to acknowledge that. But to  
follow up on the questions that were asked, the money  
that was allocated, can you confirm just very

1  
2 quickly, is it all- has it all been- what has been  
3 spent so far? And that's, you know, the- I think  
4 the \$50 million that was appropriated in FY24 and  
5 then FY26 respectively, the Bronx \$15, Brooklyn  
6 \$13.4, Manhattan \$11.8, Queens \$9, Staten Island  
7 \$2.7. How much of that has been spent? And then I  
8 know DA Clark, you said that you're the closest to  
9 having the system fully up and running. When will  
10 each of you- when do you think you'll have your  
11 systems up and running? So, what have you spent?  
12 When do you think you'll be up and running?

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: I'll jump in on the  
12 funding. So, there's one allotment, there's one  
13 tranche of money, \$50 million for capital funding  
14 that came originally and that has- by everyone's  
15 office has been designated for spending. If not  
16 actually going through- as you know, Council Member-

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Yes.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: To do it, but that's  
17 been implemented. The other was a five-year  
18 allotment of \$50 million as spread out as you said,  
19 and that is programmatic money.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Yeah.

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: So that's money  
3 that's spent every year in the budget. So, that's  
4 being spent the first year and second. We're in the  
5 third now. That has been spent and will be spent as  
6 part of our yearly budgets. There's no holding of  
7 that money.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: So, you're not spending-  
9 you're not under budget is what- I guess what I'm  
10 asking. You guys are spending at the rate to fill  
11 out the five years?

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: We're using it to pay  
13 our operating costs, our salaries-

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Yeah.

15 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Rent in some cases,  
16 things like that. So, that's part of- and primarily  
17 to pay for the expenses of discovery, to hire the  
18 extra people who do body-worn camera, to hire the  
19 extra ADAs and the list goes on from there.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: The- I want to move into  
21 something else, because obviously there's an interest  
with all parties to speed up discovery processing,  
move cases along in the system. Have your offices  
had direct access- like, would it speed up discovery,  
I should say, if your offices had direct access to

1  
2 NYPD databases, including for misconduct? Would  
3 things go faster if you had direct access to those  
4 databases?

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: I don't think so,  
6 because we still- we still- first of all, we're  
7 responsible for it whether we have direct access or  
8 not. We're getting it. Even when we get it we still  
9 have to sort it out, because-

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Yeah.

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Not everything- you  
12 know, like anything else, not everything is relevant.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: But you have to wait for  
14 them to give it to you, though, right? Like, I  
15 mean, you're waiting for- you'll say, hey, I want  
16 these things. NYPD then has to turn it to you rather  
17 than you directly having access and being like, I'll  
18 just take that because I need it. I'll take that  
19 because I need it.

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Yes, but I- the same  
21 thing for me. I wouldn't want anybody to have open  
to all my records either. You- there has to be some  
safeguards there which I appreciate. We're still  
responsible for it. We're trying to get it as best  
as we can. These discovery tools that we have will

1  
2 help make it better because we'll be able to disperse  
3 it better. As far as your question is, I'm- like I  
4 said, I'm the closest one. We should be up and  
5 running by mid-spring. I already had the talk with  
6 them. They talked to the defenders. We're just  
7 about ready. We're ironing out certain things, and I  
8 think that-

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Could  
10 everybody else just give a quick like when you think  
11 you'll be up and running? And then Chair, I have two  
12 more questions and that's it.

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: I just- in terms of  
14 direct access, I wanted to say one of the big drivers  
15 of delay-

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Yeah.

17 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: It's not what's  
18 electronic. It's what's still on paper. I know that  
19 PD has said they're starting to convert things  
20 electronically, but that is still the biggest driver  
21 of delays. Trying to track down an individual  
officer who has written something or has something on  
paper. But in terms of our ability to move forward,  
you know, we're possibly a year or more away from  
having a system built out by Nice.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Okay.

2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: And we're in the  
3 sort of the remediation stage where- you know, where-

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] I just want  
5 to be mindful of time. I just want a timeline, and-

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: [interposing] So,  
7 we're far, far.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Okay.

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: We believe it's early  
10 2027.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Okay.

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: The first one, I think-  
13 look, in a perfect world, we're all in the same  
14 system. That would be great.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Great, yeah.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: I don't have a firm  
17 projection.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Sure.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: I think what we haven't  
20 said a lot is that the Nice- I mean, you said-

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] But it's  
also- but I think it's also worthwhile and  
interesting to discuss the fact that like there might

1  
2 be different perspectives up here even amongst your  
3 colleagues. So, that's-

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: [interposing] Yeah, no,  
5 I'm- but I also think we've all been hampered.  
6 Certainly, I'll speak for my office, the Nice  
7 discussions and you can see the-

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] Yeah.

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: [inaudible] They have  
10 not been seamless, and that's been- that's delayed  
11 us.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Sure.

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: And I did want to say on  
14 the comment about the peer navigators, our program  
15 that we're advocating for The Bridge is separate and  
16 apart. It has no DA. We're not out- we give them  
17 the funding, and they go do it, so I just wanted to  
18 say that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Great, thank you.

20 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: Could I  
21 answer that one, too?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Sure.

SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: We're  
getting a vendor to handle it.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Okay.

1  
2 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: We're more  
3 in line with Queens, I guess, and we're expecting  
4 about 18 months.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Yeah. I think one of my  
6 concerns also about the discovery processing and  
7 having direct access to the database, at least from a  
8 defenders perspective, misconduct. I can't tell you  
9 how many times I litigated a case and it was three,  
10 four, five, six, seven months later, whether it was  
11 for, you know, pre-trial hearings or the- that we  
12 finally find out oh, there's misconduct, and then we  
13 resolve the case the next day. And that's the kind  
14 of stuff that like really we could be making a  
15 difference on. That's a huge deal.

16 The last thing I want to ask is just directed to  
17 you, DA Gonzalez. There has been an increase of  
18 arrests for what are lower-level offenses like  
19 sleeping on the train, and it caused an arrest to  
20 arraignment crisis a few weeks ago in Brooklyn to the  
21 point where Legal Aid ended up filing a writ about  
it. Did you push for DOTs- DATs to be issued for  
those people who were in on bail ineligible offense?  
Like, what happened there?

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: So, it was a  
3 confluence of a lot of things. B It was the snow  
4 storm. bIt was the two holidays. Typically, they  
5 have multiple arraignment parts open. You only had  
6 one part open, and then there was additionally on top  
7 of the all of the storm-related and holiday-related  
8 closures, the court house that was closest to the  
9 arraignment, that does the arraignments was having  
10 some kind of renovation. And so they were using an  
11 alternative court house that could- did not have a  
12 pen, so they would have to bring one person up at a  
13 time. And so it was a confluence of a lot of things.  
14 A number of people stepped in to try to remedy, but  
15 it was a-

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] And I can  
17 appreciate that. I guess my follow-up is just were  
18 there people there that were processed that were DAT  
19 eligible?

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: I think the answer  
21 is yes, and there was definitely conversations around  
22 alternative ways to move people from the- you know,  
23 from the system. Including, we did a hawk shift,  
24 which is, you know- 11 o'clock to-

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: [interposing] We call it  
3 the lobster shift.

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Lobster shift,  
5 right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Yeah, they didn't have  
7 them in my time, but I heard they-

8 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: So we did- there was  
9 a number of efforts. There were a number of efforts  
10 to get people out, but it should not have ever  
11 happened.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Yeah. I didn't think I'd  
13 ever say lobster shift during a budget hearing. But  
14 yeah, I mean, the last thing I'll say on that is,  
15 like if you're DAT eligible, especially in those  
16 circumstances should have DATs, but I appreciate the  
17 response. Thank you, Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so  
19 much. Next, we'll hear from Council Member  
20 Gutiérrez, then Sanchez, and then Wong, and then  
21 we'll conclude this panel. We have CCRB who has been  
patiently waiting outside. We're a little bit  
behind. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Thank you, Chair. And  
I have two DAs, but I think I can do it, because

1  
2 they're pretty straightforward and your testimonies  
3 are very thorough. DA Katz, and forgive me for not  
4 knowing this- I just wanted to ask about one of the  
5 initiatives in your testimony. I don't think you  
6 named it, but it's targeted for youth 11 to 18. You  
7 said you piloted it in 2021. Can you just share if  
8 there are any- what's the name of the initiative and  
9 if there are any partners?

10 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Right. So, I don't know  
11 which ones you're referring to, but we have several.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: I don't know either.  
13 You didn't name it. It was launched in 2021,  
14 supports youth development. It's on page three.

15 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: And Crime Prevention  
17 program.

18 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: So, we have several, so  
19 I'll just go through.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Okay.

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: So, we have youth  
initiatives for schools. We have youth initiatives  
for 11 through 18. We go into the schools. We talk  
to the students. We have a whole unit that's about,  
I don't know, three or four people- four or five

1  
2 people, I think, that go into the schools and they  
3 talk to the students. We've done about 14,000  
4 students so far as we do-

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: [interposing] Okay.

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: As we go in and we talk  
7 not only about gun violence and gang violence. You  
8 know, for instance, we had a shooting of a  
9 13-year-old kid- a young man, and the next week we  
10 went into the school in the area to talk about gun  
11 violence.

12 So, we have a very active group that goes around  
13 the borough and does that. We also have internships.  
14 We have explorer programs. We try to give- put a  
15 face to law enforcement, and we try to make sure that  
16 law enforcement is not a foreign entity to our young  
17 people. I have to tell you that we have many young  
18 people that want to come back year after year which  
19 causes some issue.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: For the same  
21 programming you mean?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Yeah, it's programming.

COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Oh. Would I be able  
to touch base with your office afterwards just to  
check if-

1 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: [interposing] Sure.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: The program has  
3 touched some of the high schools in my district in my  
4 part of Ridgewood?

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Which one?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Yeah, I'm not  
7 actually- I'm really not sure. So I can do that  
8 offline, though.

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Pierre Lazo [sp?] in my  
10 office is here. He's head of the youth program and  
11 he can give you any information. Pierre is- yeah.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Great okay I'll walk  
13 over there in a minute.

14 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Yep. He can give you  
15 any information on a specific schools that we have  
16 gone into, but we've been requested by a lot of  
17 schools to go in and talk.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Okay. Thank you.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Thank you so much.

21 And then DA Gonzalez, I wanted to ask- there was a  
significant amount in your testimony about just the  
cost of rent and the space. What are the  
conversations with DCAS like? Is this not a

1  
2 city-owned building? I'm sorry that I don't know  
3 this, but kind of what- what is the pipeline for  
4 getting you all, like, physical space. And I know  
5 that DA Katz you mentioned that in your testimony as  
6 well. And then my last question, I'm really  
7 interested in your- some of your requests, DA  
8 Gonzalez, about data storage and IT staff. If you  
9 can just let me know if in your testimony, is this  
10 additional requests that you're make- like, on top of  
11 your current budget?

12 And if you can share if any of these- for  
13 example, the data storage and technology, is that  
14 something that you're thinking can be done in-house,  
15 if it is being done in-house, or how you all are  
16 thinking about it? But I would love to touch offline  
17 some of these requests. I'm happy to lend my support  
18 for both boroughs. I know you both mentioned it in  
19 your-

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: Thank you, Council  
21 Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Thank you.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: So, just in general  
in terms of the housing, the municipal buildings that  
used to support our office was sold by the City of

1  
2 New York, and as part of a revitalization of downtown  
3 Brooklyn, we became the anchor tenant into a  
4 commercial building to guarantee that the, I guess  
5 developer, would build that area, and it became Metro  
6 Tech and it became what it is today. You know, DCAS  
7 has extended our lease for a period of time, and  
8 there are conversations around that about what's- you  
9 know, the- what the cost of rent is in that  
10 neighborhood.

11 There's seemingly very little space that could  
12 accommodate our agency at this point, but we're- we  
13 have a lease for the next five years.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Okay, we'll touch  
15 offline. Thank you so much, Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Now  
17 Council Member Sanchez.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,  
19 Chair. Hi, all DAs. Good to see all of you. I  
20 really want to focus in on the workers, the ADAs, the  
21 folks that do all of this job behind the scenes. Can  
you talk to us about their working conditions and  
ways in which you're looking to improve them and how  
the City Council can help partner in making sure that  
we get those improvements.

1  
2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: Well, we try to build  
3 an environment and a culture in our office that is  
4 very welcoming to our staff. You know, I speak to  
5 them all the time and I let them know it's not about  
6 you. It's not about me. It's about the 1.4 million  
7 people of the Bronx that we service every day. I  
8 make sure that in my recruitment and retention that  
9 we hire people that identify with the same people  
10 that make up the Bronx community.

11 So, we intentionally do that. Have a lot of  
12 Bronx residents that work for me. So they understand  
13 the community, because it's important. We can't do  
14 this work if you don't understand the community that  
15 you serve. So, we have that. As far as the working  
16 conditions, you know, we're in government buildings.  
17 We try to keep up with getting the city to make the  
18 repairs that they need to repair, but I think about  
19 the wellbeing of my staff, and that there's a  
20 work/life balance.

21 So, I've brought- I have a Wellness Department  
that works with them that are there for them for  
whatever their needs are. We have a lot of programs.  
We have employee resource groups for different  
identities or heritages and things of that nature

1  
2 where people can feel comfortable sharing their  
3 experience with each other as well as being there and  
4 having allies from other parts of, you know, the  
5 culture of the office to be there.

6 We have long-stayers in our office, you know,  
7 people that have been there 40 years, and we have  
8 people that are just starting. I just swore in a  
9 class yesterday. So, we constantly are hiring and I  
10 make sure that the people that we hire have the same  
11 value system that matches that of my vision, which is  
12 pursuing justice with integrity, meaning we going to  
13 do the right thing even when nobody is looking, and  
14 that we're working there, that it's not about self.  
15 It's about service and sacrifice to the people of the  
16 Bronx, and I give them whatever tools they need.  
17 We've had train- you know, we take all the city  
18 trainings, of course, to make sure that they're up on  
19 that, as well as I brought in consultants to help  
20 lift our culture so that it's a trust and inspire one  
21 where we hold each other accountable, that we  
understand each other, and that people want to do the  
work so that we help each other in order to get the  
work done.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Absolutely, and I  
3 appreciate that. I want to go a little bit beyond  
4 culture and into like how are the workers- for  
5 colleagues that have never visited a DA office or for  
6 the general public, you know, are these workers  
7 walking into their own offices? Do they have, you  
8 know, their own thing? So, being able to explain  
9 like how many DAs are in a single office?  
10 Understand- you know, going into the nitty gritty so  
11 that folks understand what our DAs are going through.

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY GONZALEZ: I'm happy to jump in  
13 for a second there, because one of the things I want  
14 to thank the City Council for- a couple years ago  
15 most of us testified about the need for pay parity  
16 for prosecutors compared to other city attorneys.  
17 One of the big morale issues- and I was a line  
18 prosecutor, meaning I handled cases and trials for 19  
19 years - was that prosecutors were significantly  
20 underpaid compared to other city lawyers. The City  
21 Council and the Mayor's Office helped increase our  
baseline budgets.

To increase that, it had a lot to do with morale.  
In my office, very specifically there is a request in  
our budget for a swing space, because we have no

1  
2 space for our lawyers and our staff. They are  
3 doubled and tripled up in offices in some occasions,  
4 and we definitely need some help there. Thank you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: If any other DAs want to  
6 talk about it just so that we have it on the record  
7 what our ADAs are-

8 DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLARK: I wish I could give  
9 them all their own office. We just don't have the  
10 space. I'm supposed to have 500 lawyers. I don't  
11 have space for 500 lawyers to have their own office.  
12 But there's a sense of community when they do have to  
13 work with each other. Doubled offices is not a  
14 deficit. It's a benefit to them, because they learn  
15 from each other. Shoot, when I- I'm in my 40th year  
16 as a lawyer. I started there, and when I was there it  
17 was one desk, a land line phone in the middle, and  
18 five of us used it. They don't have that. It's  
19 better than that. But you know, it's always- we  
20 could always use more space.

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: So, we have done  
22 everything we can as well to make sure that our ADAs  
23 are comfortable and are doing- so that they can also  
24 do the work they need, but also that they know that  
25 they have a support system. We've changed the

1  
2 parental leave. It's 12 weeks now for either parent.  
3 We try to reward excellence in the job as well. I  
4 mean, we could go through the idea that we had 312  
5 lawyers when I came here. We now have 413. We try  
6 to do everything from providing, you know, clean  
7 water when we can, to taking into account any  
8 accommodations that we possibly can, as well. And  
9 what Councilman Gonzalez said can't go unnoticed,  
10 which is that we've also had the opportunity with the  
11 help of the city and with a lot of you to raise the  
12 salaries to a larger extent from when we before had  
13 served.

14 DISTRICT ATTORNEY BRAGG: Similar in Manhattan.  
15 We've got people stacked up. Anytime I go to another  
16 law office or another office, I feel bad for our  
17 folks. Just given the physical state, cramped, there  
18 are no amenities. I want to echo a thanks for the  
19 pay increases. I think that is first and foremost  
20 what our folks are looking at, what their take home  
21 is. But I do also want to say when I talk to folks  
now, I think some of our asks in the budget which  
increase office resources- folks care deeply about  
the work that they are doing and the work flow, and  
when they feel stretched thin, that too affects their

1  
2 morale, and so additional resources for the office- I  
3 mean, no one can come in for one and give us more  
4 space, but the additional resources we've requested I  
5 think would help not just justice in cases, but also  
6 morale.

7 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: And I'll  
8 just echo that. One of the issues I think that our  
9 ADAs struggle with, it's really not so much the  
10 physical- you know, they're in a DAs office. They  
11 know what that's going to be and the courthouse isn't  
12 much better either. But we do have- we try to get  
13 them adequate supervision. I think one of their  
14 biggest concerns, especially new ADAs, is doing  
15 something wrong, and so we try to set up the  
16 supervisory structure so they'll have- always have  
17 enough structure. Within a bureau we might have one  
18 bureau chief and two deputies, so there'll be two  
19 there all the time and maybe a senior person, too,  
20 and then have other people try to create an  
21 atmosphere where they're welcome to ask questions.  
They won't feel foolish.

And I think that's very important for new people  
coming into this environment where the decisions they  
make are very important and affect people's lives.

1  
2 The other thing that I've tried to do in my office  
3 because we do narcotics cases, you know, they're  
4 depersonalized. Is when we're concentrating efforts  
5 in a particular community, we bring in a group of  
6 people from that community to talk to us at the  
7 beginning, tell us what the situation is that they're  
8 experiencing, the troubles they have etcetera,  
9 etcetera.

10 Let our people hear that this is whom the people  
11 they're representing in a sense, and then we bring  
12 them back after we work there for a while to hear  
13 from the community whether they've seen a difference.  
14 Those kinds of things matter to our assistants to try  
15 to really humanize the work that they're doing.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you all so much  
17 for your testimony, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Can I just- I didn't  
19 get- I'll be real quick. I adopt everything they all  
20 said. I just want to thank you for that question,  
21 Councilman, because they are unsung heroes in our  
justice system and as public servants, as our defense  
lawyers as well.

They work really hard. They are committed.  
Everything is not great, but I think what you're

1  
2 hearing is we're always trying to make it better and  
3 with your support we will. And I would certainly  
4 suggest to my local members to come in and visit and  
5 take a walk around and see the office and see what  
6 it's like. It's so interesting and so fascinating if  
7 you haven't worked in one of those offices, but it's  
8 a- thank you for highlighting their great work.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you all again for  
10 your testimony and thank you to all the work of our  
11 ADAs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Last but  
13 not least, we'll hear from Council Member Wong.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Thank you, Chair.  
15 Again, thank you, the DAs for coming today. My  
16 district consists of Maspeth, Middle Village,  
17 Elmhurst, Regal Park, Glendale, and Richwood, and my  
18 office regularly hears about alleged drug locations  
19 or illegal clubs with overnight parties and end up  
20 selling narcotics and they often have multiple events  
21 year round.

I work closely with the Queens DA office, DA  
Katz, and I want to thank her and her team for their  
dedication in putting dangerous offenders behind  
bars. Now, we know, my office knows that drug

1  
2 houses and organized narcotic activities often cross  
3 border lines and that the Special Narcotics  
4 Prosecutor play a critical role in those  
5 investigations. My question is to DA Katz and the  
6 Special Narcotics Prosecutor. When a precinct or my  
7 office forward these locations to the Queens DA, what  
8 is the process from intake to enforcement, and how  
9 often is the Special Narcotics Prosecutor brought in  
10 to these cases?

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: So, normally if it's an-  
12 so normally if a drug activity is occurring and the  
13 police are out there and they're making arrests  
14 immediately upon either viewing the illegal activity  
15 or because someone has called 911, we would get the  
16 case after they make the arrest, and then we would  
17 work with them to investigate and whatever resources  
18 they needed.

19 If it was a long-term investigation on a drug  
20 location, we would also work with the police more  
21 hand-in-hand with the detectives to make sure we both  
have whatever we need in order to make either those  
arrests or in order to educate, whatever it is that's  
the proper response to locations.

1  
2 Normally, our prosecutions and special  
3 prosecutions, they don't always overlap. Special  
4 prosecution has the resources for narcotics all over  
5 the city, folks that are referring things from all  
6 over the city. Sometimes it's from Queens. We,  
7 however, have narcotics prosecutors in-house as well.  
8 And so I have a unit of narcotics prosecutor. It is  
9 very well staffed, because it's an important part of  
10 what we do in Queens County.

11 So, yes, we have a unit that does it and  
12 narcotics prosecutors to go at that, and we would  
13 work with the police depending- it's very case  
14 specific what you're asking. So, whatever the  
15 resources we have, we would be working with the NYPD  
16 on it or other resources or other agencies like the  
17 DEA or some of our federal partners when it comes to  
18 drug investigation.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you. Thank you  
20 for the clarification.

21 SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR BRENNAN: The only  
thing that I would add to that is if we have a case  
that is a citywide case and is moving into Queens, we  
give Queens a head- the Queens DA a call, a heads up,  
that we've got an investigation which has moved into

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that area. So we try to coordinate so nobody's stepping on anybody else's toes.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Yes, and we have a prosecutor with the special narcotics prosecutor's office as well. So we work together on those cases, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY KATZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much, Council Member, for the questions. I think this pretty much concludes this part of today's hearing. Thank you so much District Attorneys and also the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for all the work you do. We look forward to continuing conversations on all the items that we talked about today. Thank you so much.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY MCMAHON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: We'll take a quick minute and next we'll hear from the Civilian Complaint Review Board, known as CCRB.

[break]

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Please can we take the conversations outside. Please, we have a hearing going on. Please take your conversations outside. Thank you.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you again  
3 everyone for joining today. Thank you for- thank you  
4 to everyone who has joined and also has remained for  
5 the many testimonies that we'll be hearing today.  
6 Now, we'll hear from the Civilian Complaint Review  
7 Board, CCRB, an independent agency in charge of  
8 investigating police misconduct issues. Thank you  
9 for being here. I'll pass it to the Committee  
10 Counsel for some procedural items.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good afternoon. Please raise  
12 your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
13 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before  
14 this committee and to respond honestly to Council  
15 Member's questions? You may begin. Thank you.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Chairperson Feliz,  
17 members of the Public Safety Committee, thank you for  
18 the opportunity to appear before you today. My name  
19 is John Darche. I use he/him pronouns, and I am the  
20 Executive Director of the Civilian Complaint Review  
21 Board, also known as the CCRB, the largest police  
oversight body in the country. I am here today to  
discuss the work of my agency, to highlight the  
important role the agency fills for New Yorkers as a  
police oversight body, and to underscore just how

1  
2 vital it is that the Agency be fully funded in order  
3 to fulfill its New York City Charter mandate.

4 Civilians deserve justice in a timely fashion, and  
5 police officers deserve an appropriate resolution in  
6 a timely fashion. Our budget request would enable  
7 that.

8 The CCRB receives, investigates, mediates, hears,  
9 makes findings, and recommends action on complaints  
10 against New York City police officers. These  
11 complaints allege the use of excessive or unnecessary  
12 force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or the use of  
13 offensive language.

14 The Board itself is made up of 15 members, whose  
15 appointments are meant to reflect New York City in  
16 all its diversity. Five members are appointed by the  
17 Mayor. Five are appointed by this Council. Three  
18 are designated by the Police Commissioner and  
19 approved by the Mayor. One is appointed by the  
20 Public Advocate. The Chair is jointly appointed by  
21 the Mayor and the Speaker of the City Council. The  
Agency's entirely civilian staff investigates  
complaints, gathers evidence, interviews witnesses  
and officers, and then shares the results of that  
investigation with the Board.

1  
2 The Board reviews the investigation and meets to  
3 determine whether or not to substantiate allegations  
4 of misconduct. In cases where the Board  
5 substantiates misconduct, it recommends discipline.  
6 Those findings and recommendations are then  
7 transmitted to the Police Commissioner, who retains  
8 the final authority on all disciplinary matters for  
9 New York City Police Department officers.

10 In the most serious cases of alleged misconduct,  
11 the CCRB's Administrative Prosecution Unit, APU, will  
12 prosecute an administrative trial. The NYPD's Deputy  
13 Commissioner for Trials and her team preside over  
14 these trials. The results of those trials are also  
15 transmitted to the Police Commissioner for her final  
16 decision. The scale of the work this Agency does  
17 cannot be overstated. We measure our work in  
18 complaints and allegations.

19 A complaint is an incident where a civilian  
20 believes misconduct occurred. An allegation  
21 describes a possible violation of part of the NYPD  
Patrol Guide. Complaints may contain more than one  
allegation and involve more than one subject officer.  
In 2025, the CCRB received 5,617 complaints, the

1 second-highest number of complaints in a decade. It  
2 received 22,172 specific allegations.

3 Of those, the Agency fully investigated 2,070  
4 complaints and 14,953 allegations. Our  
5 investigations substantiated 987 complaints and 3,173  
6 allegations, against 1,357 individual members of  
7 service. That means the CCRB substantiated 21.22  
8 percent of the allegations we fully investigated.  
9 Put another way, the CCRB substantiated at least one  
10 allegation in 47.68 percent of the complaints we  
11 fully investigated.

12 New Yorkers have the right to report allegations  
13 of police misconduct to this Agency, and it is a  
14 right that New Yorkers have been exercising with  
15 increased frequency in recent years.

16 Whether a complaint is substantiated or not, the  
17 CCRB's job is to treat that complaint seriously and  
18 to find the truth. We owe this to the civilians and  
19 police officers. The increase in complaints outpaced  
20 the CCRB's capacity to respond to complaints in a  
21 timely manner.

In 2025, on average, it took 432 days to close a  
fully investigated case. This is the fastest average  
time to close a fully investigated complaint in five

1 years. But it is still too long. In order for our  
2 system of public safety to work for everyone, both  
3 civilians and police officers, it is vital that the  
4 CCRB be given the resources to ensure all complaints  
5 can be investigated in a timely fashion, and that the  
6 evidence can be followed wherever it leads.

7 To that end, the Agency's Budget Request for  
8 Fiscal Year 2027 would provide enough funding to  
9 support all of its functions as an independent police  
10 oversight Agency: \$65,094,437 and an authorized  
11 agency headcount of 500 people. This is an increase  
12 of roughly \$36 million, and 233 staff members over  
13 the enacted FY26 budget.

14 It represents less than one percent of the New  
15 York Police Department's overall budget and  
16 headcount. If this request is granted in full, the  
17 Agency would have roughly 500 people to oversee the  
18 work of 35,000 sworn members of service. We believe  
19 this is what a fully funded Agency would look like.

20 Historically, the CCRB has been underfunded and  
21 under-resourced. Changes to the City Charter gave  
additional authority and responsibilities to the  
Agency, including investigating allegations of

1 untruthful statements, as well as racial profiling  
2 and bias-based policing allegations.

3 These changes to the Charter also gave the Agency  
4 the power to initiate investigations without having  
5 received a complaint. This tension between resources  
6 and obligations led the Agency to make difficult  
7 decisions to prioritize where and how to use the  
8 resources at our disposal.

9 On January 1st, 2024, the CCRB implemented a  
10 policy we call the Strategic Resource Allocation  
11 Determination, or S-RRAD. This policy was enacted  
12 due to a shortage of investigators as compared to the  
13 increased number of complaints the CCRB received.  
14 Under this policy, certain types of allegations of  
15 misconduct were closed as unable to investigate when  
16 they were not part of a larger complaint.

17 In 2025 alone, roughly 1,390 complaints were  
18 closed under S-RAD. S-RAD is unfair to both officers  
19 and civilians. When misconduct is alleged, it helps  
20 no one to leave these allegations uninvestigated. If  
21 the incident represents a violation of the NYPD  
Patrol Guide, the civilian should know that the  
officer was held accountable. If the incident is not  
a violation, the officer deserves to know they acted

1  
2 appropriately and the civilian deserves an  
3 explanation.

4 This is how the CCRB, as an institution, would  
5 build trust. Being unable to investigate allegations  
6 due to budgetary constraints harms all parties.

7 While the increased budget from fiscal year 2026  
8 enabled the CCRB to reduce the scope of S-RAD, we  
9 were unable to eliminate it entirely. That is why  
10 we're requesting a full budget today, to ensure we  
11 are able to investigate every complaint we receive  
12 that is within our jurisdiction.

13 Despite a lack of funding and increases to the  
14 Agency's jurisdiction, as well as to the number of  
15 complaints, the quality of CCRB investigations  
16 improved. In fact, we increased the number of fully  
17 investigated cases in which we provided a finding on  
18 the merits. What does this mean?

19 In 2025, the Agency closed just 16.2 percent of  
20 allegations in fully investigated complaints as  
21 unable to determine, the lowest percentage on record.  
Body-worn cameras factor importantly in this trend,  
as they provide key evidence that allows the Agency  
to resolve more complaints than ever before on the  
merits. We've also made efficiency a key Agency goal

1  
2 for 2026; soliciting feedback from our entire  
3 workforce to uncover new ways to be better in our  
4 work, each day.

5 Efficiency alone is not enough to respond to the  
6 scale of the work our Agency faces each year. To do  
7 that, we need additional staffing, and our budget  
8 request captures those needs. The Investigations  
9 Unit makes up the bulk of our workforce. They carry  
10 out the day-to-day work of fact-finding and  
11 interviewing. This unit requires an additional 86  
12 staff spread across several investigator roles, in  
13 order to fully address New Yorkers' complaints.  
14 These are some of the most critical positions in the  
15 Agency. Filling them is essential to meeting our  
16 duties under the City Charter.

17 Additionally, the increased overall number of  
18 investigators would allow the workload to be spread  
19 across a much wider base of staff, shortening overall  
20 investigation timelines. An efficient CCRB isn't  
21 only able to investigate more cases, it's also able  
to do so more quickly.

When this Council directed the CCRB to  
investigate racial profiling and bias based policing

1  
2 allegations, it also funded the creation of a team to  
3 conduct those investigations.

4 These investigations require specialized training  
5 and a different workflow from our general  
6 investigations. That team currently has 27 staff  
7 members, but it is in need of an additional 37  
8 positions to fully meet our responsibilities under  
9 the City Charter, including managers, supervisors,  
10 and investigators.

11 In 2012, the CCRB signed a Memorandum of  
12 Understanding with the NYPD to establish the  
13 Administrative Prosecution Unit, or APU. The APU  
14 prosecutes the most serious cases of alleged  
15 misconduct in administrative trials before an NYPD  
16 trial commissioner. As of now, this unit has 23  
17 staff. It needs two additional positions to help  
18 handle the workload associated with an administrative  
19 trials. The additional support will further increase  
20 efficiency and reduce timelines associated with these  
21 cases.

22 The CCRB's Outreach unit is the face of the CCRB  
23 for many New Yorkers. They go into communities,  
24 schools, gyms, barbershops, and everywhere New  
25 Yorkers gather to explain how the CCRB works and how

1  
2 to file a complaint. Their vital work includes  
3 initiatives such as CCRB Courtside, where we interact  
4 with New Yorkers on basketball courts and at other  
5 organized sporting events.

6 CCRB Cares, where we partner with community  
7 organizations during charitable activities, such as  
8 community cleanups and food pantries. This unit  
9 requires eight new staff to spread the word across  
10 all five boroughs about the work of the CCRB.

11 Communicating with New Yorkers is a key  
12 responsibility for any agency within the city  
13 government, but this is especially true for the CCRB.  
14 Many New Yorkers are unaware of the CCRB and their  
15 rights in an interaction with police officers.

16 For this reason, the Agency needs to be supported  
17 in its efforts to perform targeted engagement with a  
18 diverse group of New Yorkers. These efforts share  
19 information about how to file a complaint and  
20 providing this type of information to the public  
21 where they are can help increase overall trust in the  
system of public safety.

This makes New York safer for everyone: police  
and civilians alike. Beyond these core areas, the  
Agency has many needs in our other support offices

1  
2 whether it's new attorneys to support our Office of  
3 the General Counsel; new specialists to help our  
4 Human Resources department; or new information  
5 technology experts to help support the rest of our  
6 staff as they do their work.

7 It is these roles that provide less visible work,  
8 but no less important work, to help the Agency  
9 operate and fulfill its mission. I also want to  
10 reiterate the importance of having a fully staffed  
11 Board. We currently have only 11 of the required 15  
12 Board Member positions filled. The lack of a full  
13 complement of Board Members impacts our work, slowing  
14 the overall time it takes to reach a conclusion in an  
15 investigation.

16 In 2025, fully investigated cases had to wait an  
17 average of 156 days before being reviewed by a Board  
18 panel. This delay is directly related to the lack of  
19 a full Board and burdens the civilians and police  
20 officers who are waiting to see the result of CCRB  
21 investigations.

22 Filling all Board Member positions would be a  
23 simple and effective way to increase the Agency's  
24 efficiency. The work of the CCRB is essential: to  
25 assure accountability of the members of the New York

1  
2 City Police Department. That is why Mayor David  
3 Dinkins supported the transition of the CCRB into the  
4 independent agency it is today. That is why the  
5 staff tirelessly performs the work they do, day in  
6 and day out. The CCRB is the gold standard against  
7 which police review boards across the nation are  
8 measured. With the support of this Council, I  
9 believe we can do even better.

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you so much  
11 for your testimony and thank you for being here. So,  
12 I have a few questions, and also, obviously, thank  
13 you for all the work you do in investigating police  
14 misconduct cases, including in special areas like the  
15 Bronx, an area that has been affected by that. A few  
16 questions regarding headcount and also funding  
17 requests. Specifically, I want to ask about the new  
18 needs request submitted by the Board. If approved,  
19 this would increase the Board's budget by  
20 approximately 150 percent, right?

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: How are you evaluating  
whether a quick substantial increase or a slow  
gradual increase is the best way to approach this  
issue?

1  
2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: It's a very  
3 interesting question, Mr. Chair. The request is the  
4 Agency's best estimate as to what the needs of the  
5 agency are to do our work, and that is investigate  
6 all the complaints that come before our agency that  
7 are within our jurisdiction as quickly as possible.  
8 We have taken steps to make sure that should the  
9 request be granted, we are able to hire up and then  
10 have places for people to work once we get that  
11 funding.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: If- this is a- by the way, a  
13 conversation that we've been having with almost every  
14 single agency hiring, retaining, and etcetera. So,  
15 if your budget request is approved, what are  
16 recruitment initiatives that you would implement to  
17 quickly fill those positions?

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, the CCRB hasn't  
19 had a dedicated recruiter in several years. We've  
20 just identified one. We're hoping to onboard them in  
21 the next month, and using the recruiter, we're really  
going to focus on local CUNY universities to bring in  
the new investigators that we're going to need to  
staff up. Not just CUNY, but also all around the  
City.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: You somewhat mentioned this  
3 in your testimony, but what are areas and  
4 investigations you're unable to complete due to the  
5 budget restrictions, and also what are areas that you  
6 would be interested or prioritizing in terms of  
expansions.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, the strategic  
8 resource allocation determination, since we've  
9 enacted it in 2024, has impacted 3,473 complaints.  
10 In 2026 alone, there have been 199 cases in which  
we've had to close without any investigation.

11 So, the original policy included complaints that  
12 either only had one of the following allegations or  
13 some combination of just these allegations: forcible  
14 removal to the hospital, of which there were 175 in  
15 2024; threats; refusal to process a civilian  
16 complaint about a member of the NYPD and the  
17 underlying complaint was not a CCRB complaint;  
18 failure to provide Right to Know Act cards; property  
19 seizures; involved refusal to provide name or refusal  
to provide a shield number; discourteous words or  
actions and untruthful statements.

20 As a result of the Council's increase to the  
21 Agency's budget in FY26, at the start of this year

1  
2 the CCRB removed forcible removal to the hospital  
3 from the S-RAD policy.

4 So, we are now investigating allegations of  
5 forcible removal to the hospital, even if that is the  
6 only allegation contained within the complaint.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. A few questions on  
8 retention. What is the salary range of your  
9 investigator levels? Is the salary range a main  
10 reason why investigators leave the CCRB, and also  
11 will the budget request address the salary issue?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: The budget request  
13 would address the salary issue because it would  
14 budget- it would budget investigator salaries at  
15 level three, incumbent rate, which means that we  
16 would be able to promote people in a timely way when  
17 they are deserving of promotion so that we could  
18 better retain them.

19 Currently, the starting salary for level one  
20 investigator is \$49,148. For a level two  
21 investigator, \$58,000 and then for a level three  
investigator who is an incumbent, \$80,469.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. A few questions  
about body-worn camera footage. How many hours of  
footage were collected by CCRB in FY25, and how has

1  
2 this affected the timeline of investigations? Also,  
3 what is the biggest cost for the increased time to  
4 complete an investigation? Lack of investigators,  
5 anything else? Any other factors?

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, I'm going to deal  
7 with the body-worn camera question first. In 2025,  
8 the CCRB requested 3,010- made 3,010 requests for  
9 body-worn camera footage.

10 As a result, we received 2,430 positive responses  
11 with 25,818 videos. The average positive response  
12 time by the NYPD for unredacted videos is eight  
13 business days- I'm sorry, is eight calendar days.  
14 With regard to your second, Mr. Chair, if you could  
15 repeat the second part of the question?

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Yeah. Yeah, sorry, I asked  
17 like five questions at once. What is the biggest  
18 cause for the increased time to complete an  
19 investigation?

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, interestingly,  
21 we've been able to shave investigation times slightly  
in recent years. We're down to 430 days to complete  
a fully-investigated complaint, but by far, the  
biggest driver in the increase is the increased  
number of complaints combined with the lack of

1  
2 investigators, which is why we need more  
3 investigators so that we can spread the work out  
4 among different individuals so they can do the work  
5 faster.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Yeah, 430 days just to  
7 complete an investigation, that's a very long time.  
8 Do you project all investigations will be completed  
9 within the previous target timeframe of 120 days if  
10 we're able to provide this new funding? Or do you  
11 foresee any obstacles?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, one of the  
13 obstacles would be if the Board is not fully staffed.  
14 The Board itself right now has four vacancies which  
15 is separate from the issue of staffing, and that will  
16 be a bottleneck if- even if the staffing request is  
17 fully met.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you for that  
19 information. I have some more questions, but I'll  
20 pause for now. I'll pass it on to- Council Member  
21 Cabán stepped out briefly, so I'll pass it on to  
Council Member Wong.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Thank you. Thank you,  
Chair. Before I start my questions, could you  
explain- before- could you move up your mic because-

1 so we can better hear you. Yeah, move it, yeah.

2 Thank you. Thank you. Yeah.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Sorry, Council  
4 Member.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: No problem. I read here  
6 that your agency has the power to initiate  
7 investigations without having to receive a complaint,  
8 so where do you investigate then if there's no  
9 complaint? Who do you investigate?

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, the CCRB has a  
11 process in place to evaluate essentially news to see  
12 if there's an incident that we should investigate.  
13 Sometimes there are fatalities that result in no one  
14 being available to file a complaint.

15 Since the CCRB has been given the power, we have  
16 not used it. One of those- one of the reasons for  
17 that is that we're closing more than a thousand  
18 complaints a year because we don't have the resources  
19 to investigate complaints that we receive from the  
20 people of the city, it would not be fair to them that  
21 we're investigating other incidents without  
investigating the complaints that they file.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you for the  
clarification, I'm going to start with my questions.

1  
2 Accountability is important, but it has to be fair,  
3 timely, and grounded in facts, not ideology, and many  
4 of my constituents, and many of the officers feel  
5 that CCRB is quicker to assume misconduct than to  
6 recognize how complex and dangerous policing can be,  
7 especially in high crime or high tension situations.  
8 How do you respond to the criticism from officers and  
9 many in the public that CCRB often assumes misconduct  
10 first and asks questions later, especially in high  
11 profile or politically-charged cases.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, I think you just  
13 need to look at the statistics to see that the CCRB  
14 is not substantiating complaints at an abnormally  
15 high level. What you have seen is that the rate of  
16 substantiated complaints for fully investigated cases  
17 has gone up, but it has also gone up for unfounded  
18 complaints, and within guideline complaints.

19 And the reasons those three categories have  
20 increased is because the category of unable to  
21 determine has gone down. And the reason we are able  
to make determinations on the merits in so many more  
cases is because of body-worn cameras. The Police  
Commissioner testified earlier today about how

1  
2 important body-worn cameras are to policing and  
3 civilian oversight.

4 And she is correct, and they make a huge  
5 difference. And the- if you look at the actual data  
6 that the CCRB produces, the vast majority of officers  
7 who are investigated, we do not substantiate  
8 misconduct against them.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. My next question is,  
10 when NYPD's internal review clears an officer, but  
11 CCRB reaches a different conclusion, what objective  
12 standard do you use to justify overriding the  
13 judgment of the chain of command that actually runs  
14 the Department?

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: The reason the CCRB  
16 was made an independent civilian entity is because it  
17 was determined that there should be independent  
18 civilian oversight of the NYPD. That's why the  
19 Police Commissioner herself is a civilian. The CCRB-  
20 can I finish?

21 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: You can conclude and you can  
take time for another question, too.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: The CCRB is an  
independent entity. We're going to come up with  
different conclusions than the NYPD sometimes, but if

1  
2 you look at what has happened since Commissioner  
3 Tisch has become Police Commissioner there is  
4 concurrence between the NYPD and the CCRB about  
5 discipline matters at an extremely high rate.

6 Where there is disagreement, there is friction,  
7 it is- it is at times frustrating, and I can see why  
8 if you are a member of the NYPD you would be  
9 frustrated by it, but that is a healthy tension that  
10 shows there is actual independence for my agency.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Now, your investigations  
12 often take more than a year. Now, in the meantime,  
13 the officer's careers, promotions, and reputations  
14 are on hold.

15 So why should we expand CCRB's budget before it  
16 demonstrates that it can resolve cases faster and  
17 more consistently with the resources it already has?

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, I think the  
19 Agency has shown it is committed to finding  
20 efficiencies and reducing investigation times, and  
21 the numbers in the PMMR show that. The best way to  
reduce investigation times is to grant the budget  
request so that we could hire more investigators and  
complete our investigations faster.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Chair, do I have  
3 more time for another question? Thank you. Thank  
4 you. Yeah. Alright. When an officer is fully  
5 clear, what is your position on sealing the CCRB case  
6 records so the unfounded allegations do not shadow  
the officer's career forever online?

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, the CCRB is gov-  
8 our records are governed by the Freedom of  
9 Information Law in New York State, and we evaluate  
10 all of the requests we get for information and all  
11 the information that we publish based on the Freedom  
12 of Information Law. There are exceptions for privacy  
13 rights of individuals, and we evaluate every request  
14 and every piece of data we publish to make sure that  
the privacy rights of individual members of service  
are respected.

15 I recently had a conversation with our General  
16 Counsel, and we are making sure that our FOIL unit is  
17 reviewing cases- is reviewing requests and what we  
18 are putting online to make sure that we are not  
19 inappropriately, unfairly disparaging members of  
20 service and their reputations with the information we  
21 publish.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Do you feel CCRB's  
3 work has actually improved public safety?

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay, thank you. Thank  
6 you, Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. A few  
8 questions on staffing. So, obviously, when we have  
9 staffing issues that creates a lot of challenges in  
10 terms of the cases that you're not able to get to, so  
11 due to the staffing issues, what are the issues that  
12 you prioritized, and what are issues that you've had  
13 to somewhat put to the side given that you don't  
14 enough staff to handle it?

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, really, the  
16 strategic resource allocation determination, Mr.  
17 Chair, is the- that is the policy we created to show  
18 our prioritization, and the fact that we- after the  
19 Council and prior administration increased the  
20 headcount took forcible removal to the hospital as-  
21 that was our first allegation that we removed from  
the policy shows that we are committed to  
investigating complaints about improper removal to  
the hospital.

1  
2 But we try to address complaints in order of the  
3 importance of the severity of the injury to the  
4 civilian, and the interest that the Council and prior  
5 administrations have shown in the different types of  
6 misconduct.

7 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. In the first four  
8 months of fiscal year of 2026, the Board received  
9 about 2,095 complaints, a slight increase from fiscal  
10 year 2025. What units in the NYPD generate the most  
11 complaints?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Mr. Chair, I should  
13 know that, but I don't, and I'll get it back to you.

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Well, what are issues that  
15 you consistently see or have seen this past year?

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Excessive force is a  
17 common allegation, discourtesy. In the abuse of  
18 authority category we get- now that we are  
19 investigating racial profiling, bias-based policing,  
20 we have a sizable number of those complaints. We  
21 also just have stop, question and frisk, improper car  
stops, allegations such as that.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What are some examples of  
excessive force that you've seen. And obviously,  
investigating, so you don't need to get into the

1  
2 details or provide super specifics, but if you could  
3 give us some general idea of what exactly are the  
4 general excessive force cases?

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, excessive force  
6 can vary from seemingly very minor which is the  
7 amount of force used while trying to effectuate an  
8 arrest to extremely serious such as the use of a  
9 firearm or a taser, and we use the standards of the  
10 Patrol Guide and the law to evaluate all allegations  
11 of misconduct whether force or abuse of authority,  
12 discourtesy, offensive language.

13 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. From the PMMR we saw-  
14 the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, we saw  
15 that the rate of officers disciplined jumped  
16 substantially from 29 percent in the first four  
17 months of FY25 to 93 percent in the first four months  
18 of FY2026.

19 So, just wondering how has it been working with  
20 the current Police Commissioner on this issue of  
21 discipline and how does that compare to previous  
commissioners?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, I just want to  
say, the first thing with regard to discipline that  
Commissioner Tisch did was reverse the Department's

1  
2 prior policy of rejecting all substantiated CCRB  
3 complaints that resulted in discipline that they  
4 received more than 90 business days from expiration  
5 of the statute of limitations.

6 Or not more- less than 90 business days. It's  
7 like four months. That- her reversing that policy  
8 enables the Department to actually look at the  
9 complaints that we're sending to them, look at those  
10 recommendations for discipline and then determine  
11 whether the CCRB is right or wrong, and I think by  
12 her making the decision to invest the Department's  
13 time and attention into these matters has made a  
14 substantial change and a substantial impact on how  
15 the CCRB- how the NYPD is treating CCRB  
16 recommendations of discipline.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you for the  
18 information. I'll pass it on to Council Member Nurse  
19 for some questions.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I might have fully forgot  
21 what I wanted to say. But in the earlier testimony  
from the Police Commissioner, she noted that she was  
aligned with the CCRB's ruling for 90 percent of the  
cases that she took on, and I just wanted to- we  
didn't get a data number on how many were recommended

1  
2 for- to be taken on versus how many were taken on.  
3 Sorry, it's been a long day. I'm trying to make  
4 intelligent sentences.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: No, no. Council  
6 Member, I think I understand what you're saying. Are  
7 you asking how many-

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: [interposing] How many  
9 cases did you recommend move forward for discipline?  
10 Because she's saying 90 percent of the cases that she  
11 picked up to move forward with discipline she was in  
12 alignment with, but how many- I'm trying to  
13 understand what the-

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: [interposing] So, part  
15 of the problem is it's not apples to apples.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Because the  
18 discipline process unfortunately takes too long, so  
19 there are complaints that the CCRB closed in 2024  
20 that are still open now, right?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: There are frankly a  
few very old cases involving incidents that happened  
eight, nine years ago. So it is tough to give you  
the number you're looking for.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah, yeah.

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: But what the Police  
3 Commissioner testified to is accurate in the cases  
4 that are getting to her desk. So, like, they have  
5 gone through CCRB's process and then going through  
6 the Department's internal discipline process.

7 She is agreeing with the CCRB close to 90 percent  
8 of the time.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: But in relationship to  
10 what you all have in the pipeline slow dripping down  
11 there, it's what, like a tiny- it's a small amount?  
12 It's a sizable amount?

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: So, there is a  
14 sizable amount. I would say approximately 500 cases  
15 in the Administrative Prosecution Unit that have not  
16 taken- have not been disposed of. There is either-  
17 it needs to be a trial or a plea in those cases.

18 The Administrative Prosecution Unit has worked  
19 very hard to try and resolve- try or resolve, so  
20 either had the administrative proceeding or have a  
21 plea to resolve cases, and if you- and the numbers  
have gone way up in terms of dispositions in the APU  
as a result of number one, the increase in staffing  
that the APU received, but also movements in

1  
2 Department Advocates office and by the Administrative  
3 Prosecution Unit to make the process more efficient.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: So, we're making progress,  
5 but it's- we got a long way to go.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: Yes, ma'am.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, that's it. Thank  
8 you.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright, anyone else has any  
10 other questions? Council Member Wong? Okay, cool,  
11 sounds good. Alright, well thank you so much for  
12 joining today. I really appreciate your testimony  
13 and the information, also all the work that you do on  
14 the important issues that you work on.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCHE: On behalf of the  
16 staff and Board, I just wanted to say thank you for  
17 listening.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

19 [break]

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Now, we'll hear  
21 from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, MOCJ,  
the Mayor's office that focuses on many issues  
including resources for individuals that are  
incarcerated and also reentry programs, and also  
general violence interruption.

1  
2 We'll hear from Deanna Logan, Nora Daniel,  
3 Candice Julien, and Robert Fiato. I'll pass it to  
4 the Committee Clerk for some procedural items.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand.  
6 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
7 nothing but the truth before this committee and to  
8 respond honestly to Council Member's questions?

9 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin.

12 DIRECTOR LOGAN: First, I want to say thank you  
13 for having us and good afternoon Chair Feliz and  
14 Council Member Nurse. We know it's been a really  
15 long day for all of you. So, we are grateful for  
16 your stamina and for your attention.

17 Chair Feliz and members of the Council, it's my  
18 pleasure to be here today. My name is Deanna Logan,  
19 and I am the Director of the Mayor's Office of  
20 Criminal Justice which we affectionately call MOCJ.  
21 At the heart of MOCJ's work is in fact the ability to  
work towards making New York City a fairer and safer  
place for all. Every program that we operate, every  
partnership we build, and every single one of your  
dollars that you give us is invested in making sure

1  
2 and guiding a clear goal of communities safer,  
3 stronger, and using public dollars wisely. Our  
4 office is focused on addressing not just the criminal  
5 legal system, but also the underlying issues driving  
6 that system involvement. When we invest in people  
7 thoughtfully, strategically, and guided by data, we  
8 generate real return on that investment.

9 Programs that connect people to services, put  
10 roofs over their heads, help them rebuild their  
11 lives, and stabilize families and neighborhoods  
12 ultimately cost a fraction of what it takes to  
13 incarcerate someone on Rikers and our outcomes are  
14 far better.

15 Through initiatives like Supervised Release,  
16 Alternatives to Incarceration, and the Community  
17 Justice Reentry Network, we're keeping thousands of  
18 people out of jail every year. This is what it looks  
19 like when government works for New Yorkers.

20 You may have heard me say recently that public  
21 health is public safety. And a core part of our  
strategy is recognizing that our public health and  
public safety systems have symbiotic relationships.  
Research is our foundation.

1  
2 We study the patterns associated with people who  
3 are at heightened risk of entering into the criminal  
4 legal system and having that ongoing involvement.

5 What do we learn? Many people who are cycling  
6 through the legal system are navigating complex  
7 multiple combination of challenges: housing  
8 instability, trauma, untreated mental health needs,  
9 substance use disorder, and economic hardships.

10 Addressing only one of those challenges at a time  
11 doesn't work.

12 This is why we still have gaps in our safety  
13 nets. Addressing all of those challenges together  
14 does work to close those gaps, and we are now filling  
15 in those gaps by coordinating and collaborating  
16 continuously with our partners at the New York City  
17 Department of Correction, the New York City  
18 Department of Probation, the city's health agencies,  
19 our District Attorneys offices, our indigent defense  
20 providers, and a host of great community partners.  
21 That coordination is paying dividends.

MOCJ is committed to strengthening the pipeline  
connecting people leaving custody to transitional  
housing, job training, mental health services, and  
community-based mentorship. Our expansion of

1  
2 emergency transitional housing is especially critical  
3 component. With more than 100 beds coming online in  
4 the upcoming months to give more New Yorkers a stable  
5 place to lay their head during the vulnerable period  
6 of rebuilding their life.

7 We are also strengthening workforce development.  
8 Of course, training is key, and that has been the  
9 heart of all of the programmatic work that deals with  
10 workforce. But people need to be equipped with  
11 skills to do the job, and we know that. However,  
12 connecting the skilled person with the employer is  
13 critical.

14 We're investing in programs that include  
15 placement services and employer partnerships and  
16 sustained career pathways so participants can achieve  
17 the financial stability needed to support their  
18 families.

19 Thank you to second-chance employers that  
20 understand lived experience and the trauma that  
21 accompanies it and who provide not only opportunity,  
but grace and space as formerly incarcerated people  
acclimate to the work environment.

When people have meaningful work and stable  
housing, they are less likely to return to the

1 criminal legal system, benefiting entire communities.  
2 If you indulge me for a quick story, and I know we've  
3 been here a while and there's more people after me,  
4 but I want to kind of explain to you what we see.

5 I recently had the opportunity to sit down in a  
6 healing circle, and you heard earlier from DA  
7 Gonzalez about the Project Restore Project. That  
8 started as a pilot, and thank you to City Council and  
9 funding for making it baseline for Brooklyn. But I  
10 got to sit down with a number of participants from  
11 that Project Restore that MOCJ helped to start the  
12 pilot.

13 And that was the collaboration with the Brooklyn  
14 DA's Office, Mayor's Office of Mental Health in  
15 Bed-Stuy, also came in to work on that. And we often  
16 ask ourselves what does public safety look like?  
17 What does it sound like, and honestly, sitting down  
18 in that healing circle, that's what public safety  
19 looks like and sounds like.

20 It sounds like 10 young men from Bed-Stuy all  
21 with verified history of gun and gang involvement  
working out their trauma to build better lives for  
themselves.

1  
2 Now, these men I met first about 2+ years ago  
3 when they were each in rival street krewes, sitting  
4 next to their former rivals. Now they're friends  
5 collaborating on community safety and mental health  
6 initiatives.

7 They talked about the families. They talked  
8 about the families that they're now supporting, the  
9 degrees that they are getting, the careers that they  
10 are starting and pursuing, because they had the  
11 support to break a cycle, the cycle that continues to  
12 push them towards the criminal legal system. Most  
13 importantly, they discussed why these types of  
14 programming, why that type of work with Project  
15 Restore should be the reality for all, and now just a  
16 lucky few. And that's what safety looks like for all  
17 of us.

18 Look, at the same time we are clear-eyed about  
19 the challenges ahead. Our jail population inclined  
20 in recent years, so we still have a lot of work to  
21 do. We have investments to make to safely reduce the  
jail population while maintaining accountability and  
public trust. The path forward is clear. The  
solutions that work are the ones grounded in

1  
2 research, coordination across systems, and absolutely  
3 investments in people.

4 That means continuing to strengthen programs like  
5 supervised release, alternatives to incarceration,  
6 and the Community Justice Reentry Network, programs  
7 that help people stabilize their lives. Simply put,  
8 investing in people is one of the smartest public  
9 safety strategies that we have. It strengthens  
10 neighborhoods, reduces reliance on incarceration and  
11 delivers a strong return on public dollars.

12 Thank you, Council Members for your commitment to  
13 building a stronger and fairer, safer New York. I  
14 look forward to continuing our partnership and we the  
15 MOCJ team are open for questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much for your  
17 testimony and for the work that you do on the issue  
18 of criminal justice. A few questions regarding new  
19 needs. There's \$26 million that is baselined in this  
20 plan for hate crime prevention. Which services and  
21 programs will see the increases through this funding?

DIRECTOR LOGAN: Currently, that money is in the  
Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, and the  
plan is to look at the current personnel programming  
that that portfolio does and expand it.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What's the total budget of  
3 that Office of Hate Crime Prevention, and also,  
4 what's their headcount?

5 DIRECTOR LOGAN: For that I'll give our CFO.

6 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER FIATO: Yes, thank you  
7 for the question, Chair. The total budget for OPHC,  
8 the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes is \$3  
9 million and that's in OTPS, and there are three  
10 authorized fulltime personnel assigned to that  
11 office.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Is the \$26 million intended  
13 to be used citywide or specific boroughs that are  
14 facing specific issues.

15 DIRECTOR LOGAN: That office is citywide, so  
16 that's citywide funding.

17 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Few questions about reentry  
18 and ATI programs, alternatives to incarceration  
19 programs. What are programs that you've seen as most  
20 successful and how many does your office serve on  
21 that issue?

CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Thank you for your  
question. So, our ATI programs are- we have  
generally seen success with them. For the most part,  
people who enter them are well-matched. People are-

1  
2 most people who enter into ATI programs are not  
3 rearrested, and so we have some success with those  
4 programs. They serve about 9,000 people a year for  
5 ATIs; for reentry it's about 4,000.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: 9,000 and 4,000. And could  
7 you give us some specifics on those programs? What  
8 exactly are things that they provide?

9 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Sure. So, reentry  
10 services are intended to be comprehensive, and so our  
11 providers do discharge planning inside of Rikers, and  
12 then also in community services. So people are able  
13 to get connected to mental healthcare, be able to get  
14 connected to services. Any- you know, our case  
15 managers are pretty comprehensive about what they're  
16 able to connect people to, even though we do know  
17 that there are- there continue to be gaps for people  
18 with higher needs.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: A few questions about the  
20 Rikers population. As you know, one of the prime  
21 drivers of the inflation of the Rikers population is  
the long delays and extreme length of time criminal  
cases take to resolve. What are steps that MOCJ is  
taking to reduce the amount of time that criminal  
cases take?

1  
2 DIRECTOR LOGAN: Thank you for the question.  
3 There are a couple of steps. So, first and foremost,  
4 MOCJ is looking at all of the criminal legal system  
5 as a whole.

6 First and foremost it is ensuring that the  
7 programs that do not have people going into Rikers  
8 are able and ready for the capacity to support  
9 people. So, the Project Resets, the ways that we  
10 look at those individuals who are- have a persistent  
11 pattern that we are consistently engaging with so  
12 that they don't- they break that cycle of coming back  
13 in where you would see them going into Rikers,  
14 because now they have accumulated cases and they fall  
15 into harm and harm, right?

16 So, the trajectory is usually them increasing and  
17 what we're looking to do with our Intensive Case  
18 Management program is identifying those individuals  
19 sooner, and truncating the arch of them repeating and  
20 coming back into the system by connecting them sooner  
21 in the process so the services that would then stop  
them from going into the system in the first place.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: What are steps that MOCJ is  
taking to ensure that the NYPD is providing evidence  
in a timely way?

1  
2 DIRECTOR LOGAN: That's a big ask. So, we work  
3 with NYPD. We work with the DA's offices, and we  
4 have looked at the ability to provide discovery  
5 across the city. One of the areas that we worked on  
6 very closely with NYPD and with the DAs is just the  
7 ability to make sure that the systems actually spoke  
8 to one another, right?

9 Our First Deputy Director was crucial in  
10 navigating the- it's- the acronym is API, and my  
11 public affairs guys is going to kill me, because I  
12 use the acronym, but it really is the bridge that  
13 delivers the information from PD systems to DA  
14 systems, and given that there are five of the  
15 electeds, as well as Special Narcotics, it was a feat  
16 to make sure that that bridge stayed open with the  
17 vendor that PD was using so that we could ensure that  
18 there was no gap and that there was no elongating of  
19 the time. As they told you earlier, each one of them  
20 building their own systems has its- has had the  
21 issues we see whenever we're rolling out new  
technology across, there have been challenges and  
delays, but they're actively working on it, and we've  
been actively working with all of them to navigate  
some of the places where we have to make sure that

1  
2 the vendors meet the goals for the city, meaning the  
3 DAs and NYPD and the defenders alike.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. And final question  
5 before I pass it on to colleagues. Question about  
6 ATI and reentry services. The Preliminary Budget  
7 includes a \$1.3 and \$3.3 cut to ATI programming and  
8 reentry services. Do we think that it is wise to cut  
9 these services? I think the answer to that is no.  
10 Are we taking steps to make some restorations?

11 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: So, we continue to work  
12 with OMB to ensure that we have the appropriate level  
13 of services for the- for ATI and reentry.

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Have you started those  
15 conversations yet, or?

16 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We're continuing to work  
17 with them on it, yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. So, I'll pause here.  
19 I'll pass it on to Council Member Nurse for some  
20 questions.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you. Thank you,  
Chair. Good to see you all. I have questions I  
promise. Local Law 139 mandates MOCJ ensure that  
when assessment is required for acceptance to a  
court-based alternative to incarceration program, a

1  
2 holistic clinical assessment shall be completed  
3 within three or six- three weeks or six weeks for  
4 more complicated cases.

5 We know that the legal mandate just took effect  
6 in February. So, you know, kind of what are you all-  
7 how are things going? Are we hitting those  
8 timelines? Is there capacity for it?

9 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: It's a little early to  
10 provide specifics. However, we- the program is  
11 funded. CJI has received the funding for it, and  
12 they are currently working to staff up.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And how long do  
14 assessments take on average now?

15 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: I would have to get that  
16 number for you. I know it varies depending on how  
17 complicated the case is.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Would it be fair to say  
19 longer than six weeks normally?

20 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Without additional  
21 resources, yes, it can take longer.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And who will be  
providing the assessments just for the record?

1  
2 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: So, we're working through  
3 CJI, but it will be- they're clinical assessments so  
4 it would be clinical staff that'd be doing that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And then for supervised  
6 release, which we've talked about a bunch, and over  
7 the last couple of years we see the Preliminary  
8 Budget as cutting it by- cutting funding for it by  
9 \$4.5 million.

10 Do you know where those cuts are going to be  
11 made, to what parts of the program?

12 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: So, we're continuing to  
13 work with OMB on looking at the numbers for SRP over  
14 the past year and over years past just to see where  
15 those numbers lay, and determining the right level  
16 for it.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. Do you know if any  
18 of those cuts will be made to some of the intensive  
19 case management program?

20 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We do not have that  
21 information [inaudible].

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah, I would just say  
23 that is, you know, something we've all been  
24 advocating for, especially to safely bring down the  
25 jail population and obviously reduce violence and get

1  
2 people out who might not necessarily need to be  
3 there, but might need some extra eyes and ears.

4 So, hopefully we can make sure that the case  
5 management is sustained and that we're able to get  
6 people out and continue to bring down the jail  
7 population. And quickly on Harbor House, there's  
8 over 100 beds and a month-long waiting list. Do you  
9 have any plans to grow the number of residential  
10 treatment beds for people with dual diagnoses?

11 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: That is a clear gap that  
12 we have seen in services and it is something we're  
13 continuing to work on to figure out exactly what the  
14 gap is and what that looks like long-term.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: But no plans? Nothing in  
16 this plan for additional beds?

17 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Not currently.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. From what we're-  
19 what we've been told, it sounds like there's space to  
20 add 50 beds which would cost about roughly \$3 million  
21 to kind of outfit the space. Is that your  
understanding?

CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We have heard that from  
partners, yes.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. Okay. And then I  
3 saw that you're adding from your testimony 100 beds-  
4 that's for the transitional emergency housing? Okay.

5 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Yes, it is.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: That's great. I think  
7 thats- and do we know where- sorry. What borough  
8 will that be, or is that just across the board?

9 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We're looking at a few  
10 different boroughs. We're looking in Queens and also  
11 in Brooklyn and possibly the Bronx.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And you don't have  
13 the distribution yet, though.

14 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We don't have the exact  
15 distribution.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. One other-  
17 [inaudible] I guess people are joining us virtually,  
18 but I have one more question. For the Local Law 92-

19 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Sergeants?

21 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright, please let's mute  
all the zooms.

UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible] but that should close  
at like six o'clock.

1  
2 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, that's what I'm saying.  
3 That's why-

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Please mute  
5 yourself if you're on Zoom.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Hopefully they'll make it  
7 by six. Local Law 92 from 2023, there was a resource  
8 navigator program for women, transgender, intersex,  
9 non-binary, and gender non-conforming people. Is  
10 this resource navigator program fully operational and  
11 fulfilling its mandate?

12 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: We do have within our  
13 reentry services resource navigation, and then also  
14 we have on our website the ability to go in and  
15 search for those services, yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And what budget  
17 line item is this program included under?

18 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: I don't think we- I think  
19 we were able to do it in a budget neutral way.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I'm sorry, can you bring  
21 the mic a little bit closer? Sorry, I'm going deaf.

CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: I'll turn it over to our  
CFO.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER FIATO: I believe the  
budget item is included under our reentry budget.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Under reentry? Okay.  
3 Okay. Those are my questions, Chair. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. A few  
5 more questions. A question about the Intensive Case  
6 Management pilot. This is a pre-trial supervised  
7 release program that provides case workers to those  
8 that- who check in and also offer services and  
9 provide reminders to people of their court dates and  
10 other things. Does the Preliminary Budget include  
11 funding to expand on this, or is that something that  
12 there's a planned cut on that program?

13 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER FIATO: Chair, currently  
14 the funding is maintained for fiscal year '26 at \$9  
15 million. There is not an out-year funding at the  
16 moment, but we continue to work with OMB to assess  
17 the program needs and the fiscal needs to continue  
18 the program.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Similar question,  
20 but I guess on the issue of District Attorneys, what  
21 steps is MOCJ taking to ensure that District  
Attorneys and defenders have installed technology so  
they can process, store and share evidence  
efficiently? And also, the state approved \$50  
million for this two years ago. Do we have any

1  
2 information on when this will be installed and  
3 finalized?

4 DIRECTOR LOGAN: So, in working with the DAs, we  
5 talk to them about needs and where they are with the  
6 discovery. The discovery funding that the state  
7 provided went directly to the District Attorneys, and  
8 so they are- they managed what they spent those funds  
9 on in terms of the technology and their  
10 infrastructure bills.

11 Given that each office has its own separate  
12 infrastructure, it's our understanding that they're  
13 in different places and that they are diligently  
14 working to get a place of having their systems  
15 completed, but we understand that the Bronx started  
16 sooner with one of the vendors and may be in a better  
17 place to be moving through what the technology looks  
18 like.

19 Queens had its own internal database system that  
20 it was building out. Manhattan also has a good  
21 infrastructure system that it was building out.  
Staten Island was using a product that was on the  
state level, be it used by other prosecutors across  
New York State.

1  
2 And Brooklyn also is looking at building up its  
3 infrastructure. So, each one of them is in a  
4 different place and we continuously work with them as  
5 well as the Corporation Counsel where there may be  
6 challenges with contracting to ensure that they are-  
7 resources are being appropriately dedicated towards  
8 the technology bills and any challenges are  
9 addressed.

10 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. And last question  
11 for me: Can you talk to us about some of the  
12 criminal justice housing related programs that you  
13 have. I know you provide transitional housing for  
14 those exiting Rikers. Can you talk about those  
15 housing programs a little bit?

16 DIRECTOR LOGAN: Sure. It's our emergency and  
17 transitional housing program. We work with three  
18 providers to implement that program. It's the  
19 Fortune Society, Housing Works, and Housing Plus  
20 which is a consortium for women. And we have about  
21 800 beds open now, and we're planning for about 150-  
about a 150 more over the next year.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you so much.  
Anyone else has any other questions? Alright, so I

1 think this concludes this part this of the- Actually,  
2 Council Member Wong has a-

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: [interposing] I'll squeeze  
4 in a question. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you,  
5 Chair. I noticed that you offer services for  
6 defendants as well as services for victims. Is that  
7 right? No? I'm wrong?

8 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Not quite. We do have  
9 some services for victims, yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: So, how do you balance it  
11 because they seem to be, you know, conflicting goals  
12 here?

13 CHIEF OF STAFF DANIEL: Well, most of the  
14 contracts for victim services sit with HRA now.  
15 However, we believe that the criminal justice system  
16 is- the criminal legal system is a continuum, and  
17 everybody needs to- we're looking at public safety.  
18 It helps us both to ensure that victims have what  
19 they need and then ensure that people are less likely  
20 to reenter the system. So, that's how we sort of  
21 balance the concept.

DIRECTOR LOGAN: Thank you, Council Member Wong.  
And I also want to just highlight the fact that we

1  
2 are- our community courts deal a lot of work with  
3 restorative justice.

4 So that means that instead of looking at a  
5 punitive model meaning you did something bad, and so  
6 now we're going to punish you, and the person who was  
7 harmed doesn't necessarily get the justice that  
8 they're seeking. So, restorative models allow both  
9 the individual that was harmed and the individual  
10 that did the harm to work together to think about  
11 what healing really looks like. Because healing  
12 doesn't always mean that we have to put somebody in  
13 jail.

14 Healing can be what do I need to do to try to  
15 bring you back to the place you were before I did  
16 this harm to you, and working together, the person  
17 who was harmed and the person who did to the harm  
18 come to a resolution as to how the two of them walk  
19 away from that scenario stronger and better for the  
20 interaction and community is stronger at that point  
21 as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER WONG: Okay. Thank you for  
clarifying.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so much  
again for joining us today. We look forward to

1 continuing the conversation on the many topics that  
2 we have talked about today, and thank you for the  
3 work you do.

4 DIRECTOR LOGAN: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Now we'll be  
6 opening the hearing for public testimony. I remind  
7 members of the public that this is a government  
8 proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all  
9 times.

10 As such, members of the public shall remain  
11 silent at all times. The witness table is reserved  
12 for people who wish to testify. No video recording  
13 or photography is allowed from the witness table.  
14 This hearing is already being recorded.

15 Further, members of the public may not present  
16 audio or video recordings as testimony, but may  
17 submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant  
18 at Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

19 If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please  
20 fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms  
21 and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you'll  
have two minutes to speak on today's oversight  
hearing topic, the budgets of the New York City

1  
2 Police Department, District Attorneys, CCRB, and  
3 MOCJ, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice.

4 If you have a written statement or additional  
5 testimony you'd like to submit on the record, please  
6 provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant at  
7 Arms. You may also email written testimony to  
8 [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov) within 72 hours of the  
9 close of this hearing. Audio and video recordings  
10 will not be accepted. For in-person panelists please  
11 come to the table once your name has been called.

12 I'll now call the first panel, in-person panel, who  
13 has already joined: Tina Luongo from the Legal Aid  
14 Society, Piyali Basak from the Neighborhood Defender  
15 Services, Juval Scott from the Bronx Defenders, Stan  
16 German from the New York County Defender Services,  
17 and Lisa Schreibersdorf from the Brooklyn Defender  
18 Services.

19 So, I guess we can start from left to right, or  
20 do you want to start from right to left?

21 STAN GERMAN: We have an order, so we're going to  
go- if it's okay, we'll go this way.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Sounds good. And we'll  
provide Council Members with four minutes of

1  
2 questions. For this panel, we'll provide five  
3 minutes for the opening statement. Thank you.

4 STAN GERMAN: Thank you. Good afternoon Council  
5 Members and Chair. My name is Stan German. I'm the  
6 Executive Director for New York County Defender  
7 Services. Today's March 18th, in the defender  
8 community and courts throughout the country, this is  
9 known as Gideon's Day. 63 years ago the Supreme  
10 Court issued the ruling in Gideon V. Wainwright that  
11 essentially poor people accused of crimes have the  
12 right to counsel, and I'm hoping that's an omen that  
13 in this budget year we are going to see the kind of  
14 budgets that reflect the value that all our public  
15 defender offices and our staff bring to the criminal  
16 legal system.

17 The reality is that in terms of a marketplace,  
18 New York City is simply not competitive with the rest  
19 of the country. When you look at jurisdictions in  
20 large cities like Los Angeles, Atlanta, Seattle,  
21 Oakland, San Francisco, all of them have starting  
salaries for public defenders north of \$105,000.  
When you look at federal defenders who are public  
defenders in the federal system throughout the  
country, they have a similar starting salary.

1  
2 If you look at upstate counties in New York  
3 State, closer to home, there are seven counties  
4 upstate with a lower cost of living where the  
5 starting salary is at \$100,000 or less. And if you  
6 take into account the cost of living adjustments for  
7 cities like Minneapolis and Houston, they are also  
8 north of \$100,000. New York City continues to lag  
9 behind.

10 Now, on the issue of affordability, we've been  
11 talking about this issue long before it became a  
12 mayoral hot topic last year. We've been coming to  
13 this chamber year after year after year talking about  
14 affordability, and the struggles that our staff have  
15 in making a livable wage in New York City.

16 You have law students who are graduating with  
17 six-figure student loan debts, and yet they choose-  
18 they choose to not go into the private sector, but  
19 serve the public. We have got to do better by our  
20 staff.

21 You've asked a lot of questions today, Chair,  
about ATIs, alternatives to incarceration. You asked  
MOCJ and you asked the DAs. The reality is that work  
in large part gets done by the social workers in our  
offices. That takes preparing clients, discharge

1  
2 planning, finding drug programs, finding a place to  
3 sleep, going through the diversion process at the  
4 different DAs offices. It's our staff that are  
5 navigating all of that space, and all of us  
6 collectively, we need more resources for more social  
7 workers.

8 We are not going to close Rikers Island unless we  
9 have the kind of social services that the clients are  
10 going to need so that we can safely reduce the jail  
11 population at Rikers Island.

12 Closer to home, I just want to do a comparison,  
13 because you know, at the end of the day, a budget is  
14 a value statement. It tells New Yorkers what this  
15 chamber values. And over the past four years with  
16 the prior administration, a clear value statement was  
17 set. N

18 YPD salaries went up significantly. A five-year  
19 police officer with minimal overtime makes \$150,000  
20 per year. A public defender by contrast it would  
21 take them 20 years to make \$150,000. The retention  
problem is real. Our staff are forced to choose  
between do I have a child and incur all the expenses  
with child care, or do I stay as a public defender?  
And what we see increasingly is of course they're

1 leaving our offices, whether it's to buy a home or to  
2 start a family.

3 When you lose that experience, again, case  
4 processing takes a hit. A more senior lawyer can  
5 adjudicate a case more quickly than a younger  
6 attorney who's learning the process. All of this we  
7 can tie into our mandate to close Rikers Island, and  
8 we need budget increases which my colleagues will  
9 address specifically in order to make that happen.  
10 Thank you.

11 TINA LUONGO: Good afternoon and thank you very  
12 much, Chair Feliz, and thank you, Council Member  
13 Wong, for staying. I'm Tina Luongo. I'm the Chief  
14 Defender at the Legal Aid Society. I've been  
15 practicing as a public defender in this new- in this  
16 city since 2002.

17 Let me start where this actually lives, in the  
18 real lives of the people we serve and the people who  
19 will likely come as the members of the public to  
20 testify about their needs. When New Yorkers are in  
21 crisis- New Yorkers are in crisis, when someone's  
arrested, when a parent is at risk of losing a child  
or a child is accused of a crime, when a family's  
rent is due and a court date is missed because of

1  
2 work, when a person is terrified about what one  
3 mistake could mean for their future, public defenders  
4 and our interdisciplinary teams are the people  
5 closest to what is needed and they are closest to  
6 where the solutions lie. But here's the hard truth.  
7 The City cannot keep asking our teams to carry more  
8 crisis, more complexity, and more responsibility while  
9 failing to sustain the workforce that makes those  
10 outcomes possible.

11 So I want to be clear about what we are asking  
12 today and why it can no longer wait yet another  
13 fiscal year. We need an infusion into our funding  
14 streams above about \$100 million to fully support and  
15 allow us to be able to work with our staff, many of  
16 them unionized, many of them in this audience, many  
17 of them watching online who do this work every day so  
18 that we can do what actually Stan has just said.  
19 Because the reality of this situation is if we don't,  
20 we are not just failing them, we are failing the  
21 people who are dragged every day into the criminal  
legal system, the family separation system and the  
immigration detention system. Because that is who is  
at the heart of representing clients and representing  
those families to turn the system around.

1  
2 In addition to that \$100 million, right now it is  
3 critically important to fund immigration  
4 representation, and there's a lot talk in a separate  
5 hearing that covers that type of funding for our  
6 immigration units, but there is a specific unit in  
7 our offices that does work pursuant to the  
8 constitution under a case Kentucky V. Padilla [sp?]  
9 that indicates that as public defenders, as criminal  
10 defense lawyers, we must advise our clients who are  
11 in the criminal legal system of adverse immigration  
12 consequences.

13 And now more than ever it is critical that we  
14 build bigger teams because frankly what we're falling  
15 right now is an increase of the harms given the  
16 federal actions across the country and specifically  
17 in our city. And then my colleagues will talk about  
18 the fact that we need real change in our contracting  
19 process, because the way in which our monies flow and  
20 the monies flow to other nonprofits. It's very  
21 different than how the money flows to the District  
Attorneys. And that creates lag times and cash flow  
issues that are real.

So, I turn this now to my colleagues to go more  
into depth, but this is what's at stake. I'm asking

1  
2 that we treat our public defenders and our staff the  
3 way New York treats other essential services as a  
4 core infrastructure that is absolutely critical, and  
5 if we do not address this, our attrition will  
6 continue and all the things we talked about, about  
7 moving and case processing will simply not be  
8 available, because at the heart of it is the public  
9 defender who needs to represent that person in court.  
10 Thank you.

11 JUVAL SCOTT: Sorry about that. Good afternoon.  
12 My name is Juval Scott. I'm the Executive Director  
13 of the Bronx Defenders. Unlike my colleagues I don't  
14 have a career practicing in New York. I came from  
15 the federal defender system, and so I've been the  
16 Executive Director for about 19 months. I'll admit  
17 that as I start these comments, I'm a bit, you know,  
18 uncertain of where to begin, because I believe that  
19 if we were here to have a serious conversation that  
20 we would be treated in a similar way as the District  
21 Attorneys, and we would have meaningful conversation,  
and we would have a panel that was dedicated and  
allocated to us.

And the reason why that would happen is because  
there's no way that you increase prosecutions.

1  
2 There's no way that you can have a serious inquiry  
3 about what prosecutors need without critical  
4 understanding of what the constitutional counterpart  
5 to the prosecutor's office is, and that's public  
6 defenders.

7 Today is National Public Defender Day, and today  
8 I got to watch the prosecutors praise the City  
9 Council for increasing salaries for their staff,  
10 making it more comfortable for them to do the work  
11 that- the other side of the work that my- the people  
12 in my office do.

13 But we're not able to offer that same praise,  
14 because year after year as I understand it, before I  
15 got here and even since I've been here, we continue  
16 to ask City Council, the City, to increase funding  
17 for the salary and benefits lines for public  
18 defenders in New York City.

19 It is true that federal defenders in New York  
20 City make a considerable amount more than public  
21 defenders in our offices. Public defenders at about  
10 years in the federal defender system make about  
\$196,000. That is far more than what the public  
defenders in our offices make. But if you look at

1 cities that are comparable to New York, even that is  
2 low.

3 The lowest salary for public defenders in  
4 comparable California cities is \$134,000 a year.  
5 That's to start right out of law school. That is the  
6 starting rate, and the reason why that is meaningful  
7 is because it allows young people to come in to focus  
8 on the work so that they can do critical work on  
9 behalf of the people that we represent, the community  
10 that we serve so that they can gain the skills and  
11 training and assets needed to do work at the highest  
12 level, and so they stay in the work, and so that  
13 we're not constantly having to retrain new people  
14 year after year and not keeping institutional  
15 knowledge so that people who do come in as new  
16 attorneys are able to benefit from their colleagues  
17 who remain in the offices.

18 That's what makes a public defender office great.  
19 That's what makes public defense a sustainable  
20 pathway, a career pathway, in large and major cities.  
21 And so we ask the city- you know, we ask the City  
Council as we do every year to increase significantly  
the salaries on behalf of public defenders. It's the  
only way to make the work sustainable. It's the only

1 way that we can continue to recruit. And we'd note  
2 that people who do this privately and are appointed  
3 on cases get paid considerably more than our staff.

4 So, you know, paying institutional providers  
5 additional money still realized a cost savings for  
6 the city. And so we really would ask that you think  
7 about what it means for people to dedicate their  
8 career to representing the community's most  
9 vulnerable citizens, and to really think about what  
10 it means for them to have to weight whether or not  
11 they can pay their bills as they do this work and  
12 focus on- they should be able to focus on the work.  
13 We ask a lot of our employees, and so we're asking  
14 for you to increase the money that we're able to pay  
15 them and the benefits lines, because it's not keeping  
16 pace.

17 Health care benefits are going up across the  
18 board. All benefits are going up and we need to be  
19 able to meet the moment, because that is our  
20 constitutional mandate. Thank you.

21 LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: Hi, I'm Lisa  
Schreibersdorf. I'm the Executive Director of  
Brooklyn Defender Services. We represent people in  
Brooklyn and Queens. I interview dozens of people

1  
2 each year who make the commitment to bring their  
3 skills, dedication and talent to helping people who  
4 get arrested. When people are arrested, they face a  
5 wide variety of lifelong consequences such as loss of  
6 educational opportunities, loss of employment,  
7 eviction from housing, deportation, and many other  
8 harms.

9 Each of these is the responsibility of that  
10 person's attorney, their criminal defense attorney.

11 No matter the seriousness of the underlying case, the  
12 impact on the people we represent is wide and deep,  
13 and the staff that do this work give themselves to  
14 the work, including the support that is needed to  
15 deal with these issues, along with things that are  
16 affecting our clients such as drug and alcohol use,  
17 mental illness, physical illness, impairment,  
18 disability, trauma, and poverty.

19 Despite their good work, many of my staff do not  
20 have sufficient money to pay their own rent, pay  
21 their own utilities, and certainly not to keep up  
with their student loans.

My office is scheduled to conduct collective  
bargaining this year, and the staff is understandably  
frustrated that year-in and year-out they come to me

1  
2 as their leader and just want to be paid a wage that  
3 corresponds with the other big cities and which can  
4 provide them with a living wage.

5 All of them have given up the financial benefits  
6 of working at corporate law firms or even other types  
7 of legal work that can be a lot more lucrative. And  
8 while they do this important work for the individuals  
9 we serve as well as honestly for our very democracy,  
10 they are devalued over and over by the city, the city  
11 that they call home and the city to which they have  
12 devoted themselves.

13 It is not surprising that this has a significant  
14 impact on the morale of the office. It is not  
15 surprising that people lose hope, not only for  
16 themselves, but for their clients and for the systems  
17 that they are facing every single day.

18 The issue is a crisis beyond the individual  
19 employee who well-deserves this raise. It is  
20 existential and now is the time to show that it will  
21 end. The progress will be made that there is a  
22 commitment by this Council to pay the essential  
23 workers that we are.

24 To do that, we must focus a little bit on some  
25 boring wonky stuff which is always my assignment.

1  
2 You'll get used to that. That's the procurement  
3 process. Unlike our counterparts at the DA's office,  
4 we are not government agencies. We are not elected  
5 officials. We are not blessed with free rent, good  
6 pensions for our staff or the resources of the entire  
7 NYPD, the Medical Examiner's Office, to work on our  
8 cases.

9 We are nonprofits with a contract with the City  
10 of New York, and due to that, we are bound to  
11 procurement rules that include bidding for our work  
12 on a regular basis. And often, the financial  
13 barriers that also incumber other nonprofits that are  
14 providing an entirely different type of service.

15 The next RFP already are overdue. Our process-  
16 RFP process and it's overdue. It may come out this  
17 September for the next fiscal year. It may be  
18 delayed again. During these in-between years, the  
19 City has historically not provided a real avenue to  
20 address specific funding shortfalls which makes it  
21 really critical to assure that when this comes out,  
when this RFP comes out, it has to have the proper  
amount of funding.

And in order to give our staff the salaries that  
reflect their value and that are competitive, we

1 estimate as you heard earlier, it's about \$100  
2 million just for staff funding. We have thousands of  
3 people working for us. That needs to be added to the  
4 RFP. We can't just talk about it. It needs to be  
5 funded before that process begins. That also does  
6 not include increases in rent, need for more space  
7 which we all have, increases in health insurance, and  
8 just about every other everyday item that is part of  
9 our budget like pens or computers.

10 We are asking that you please fight for that RFP  
11 this year so that our boring and burdensome- yes, I  
12 wrote that down as I was sitting here all day- our  
13 burdensome procurement process is fruitful and  
14 results in a meaningful use of our resources and  
15 time. Thank you very much.

16 PIYALI BASAK: Good afternoon, Council. My name  
17 is Piyali Basak. I'm the Managing Director for the  
18 Neighborhood Defender Service in Harlem. I  
19 wholeheartedly join my colleagues in this request for  
20 increased funding to support our offices, especially  
21 so that we can provide increased salaries. I have  
until about a year ago I was a public defender before  
I was in this role representing clients, and I can  
tell you every single one of our colleagues of our

1  
2 staff who come into this work come into it with a  
3 commitment to serve our communities. And I hope the  
4 Council honors that commitment.

5 But I want to focus on our request for additional  
6 funding to increase Padilla teams. Immigration Law  
7 is complex and subject to the abrupt, dramatic shifts  
8 sometimes changing the legal consequences of a  
9 criminal case over night. There's a great deal of  
10 nuance and understanding. To understand the status  
11 of an individual person based on their history, as  
12 well as a specific impact of a plea bargain.

13 Given the high court mandate and the necessity to  
14 provide accurate, up-to-date, specialized immigration  
15 advice, our offices have hired Padilla attorneys,  
16 dedicated attorneys providing this advice.

17 Over the past year, increased ICE presences- and  
18 I'm sure I don't need to educate the Council about  
19 that- has created a sharp uptick in the need for our  
20 Padilla attorneys. Our staff had to devote  
21 significant time and resources to tracking daily  
policy changes, court rulings, enforcement practices  
while also trying to provide clear guidance to our  
teams.

1  
2 Our non-citizen clients, they're terrified. Even  
3 those with lawful status face a possibility that even  
4 a minor criminal offense can lead to detention and  
5 separation and permanent exile from the United  
6 States.

7 Our clients require more direct contact and  
8 support, and we try to do so by offering that, by  
9 providing the social support as well as connection to  
10 other resources. We're constantly monitoring the  
11 Department of Correction's actions, and for clients  
12 who have state, we're providing court and guidance  
13 when it's needed.

14 We help connect them to attorneys, and we are  
15 also constantly providing access to our clients, to  
16 immigration teams who are receiving nonstop calls  
17 about check-ins with immigration authorities and  
18 questions about ICE presence at schools and homes,  
19 and other concerns they might have.

20 And so we are asking the Council for additional  
21 funding and \$10 million to our overall budget so that  
MOCJ can distribute these funds to our offices. This  
sustained and expanded funding for this unit will  
allow us to continue providing this essential

1  
2 guidance, responding to the increasing complexity of  
3 these immigration cases. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you all for  
5 being here. Thank you for your testimony and also  
6 for all the work you do for our city and the people  
7 of this city, especially those that are under some of  
8 their most vulnerable positions.

9 So, I have a few questions about salary,  
10 retention, and then funding. Salary- I used to be a  
11 tenant attorney for Bronx Legal Services. The same  
12 issues that all of you mentioned I saw at basically  
13 the office training new lawyers, law school graduates  
14 generally, spending lots of resources training them,  
15 and then two years later they lose them.

16 So they have to start all over which, you know,  
17 obviously not a good system. So, on that issue, what  
18 would be- what do you think should be, I guess, the  
19 proper starting salary, and also how much funding  
20 would it require to get there.

21 I think I heard \$100 million, but I just want to  
make sure that I'm putting that on the right issue.

TINA LUONGO: And I think Stan mentioned it,  
that, look, a starting salary for somebody up in  
Schenectady, New York, was a \$102,000. So, if you

1  
2 look at that as a benchmark. Certainly we believe  
3 that we have to at a minimum look at our upstate  
4 counties and come to- but that- think about that,  
5 because you have to factor in cost of living. But at  
6 some point, we have to be realistic that \$100,000  
7 starting salary is something that we should start to  
8 think about and implement. And then realize that  
9 there have to be consistent cost of living increases  
10 to keep pace with inflation. What my colleague Lisa  
11 testified to is when our contracts are held flat year  
12 after year during our comp- sixth year and now  
13 upwards of eight years of contract.

14 Because we are nonprofits, if our rent goes up,  
15 if our health care goes up, the only- we don't get  
16 extra money and so then you have to start then  
17 thinking about how am I making a choice as a manager  
18 to have to both increase the salary which is what we  
19 need, or not then pay the increase in the rent on the  
20 space we need.

21 My colleagues in the District Attorney offices do  
not have that problem, do not have that problem. And  
so it's not only about the starting salary, but then  
it is about experience. We talked a lot about case  
processing and that really is about for us, not about

1 cases, but about people, our clients. And so if you  
2 have an attorney who is taking on a serious case  
3 where someone is incarcerated, and they leave because  
4 they can't afford it any longer. That client has to  
5 get transferred to another lawyer, and that lawyer  
6 cannot pick up the case, that case, and meet that  
7 client and run off to trial.

8 They now need to take the time to relearn  
9 everything and build a relationship. And I have had  
10 a situation where clients are in- at Rikers on  
11 serious chargers, and in the span of that case, two  
12 attorneys have left the office.

13 Now, it's not their fault. They were just that  
14 breaking point. So, besides starting salary, we must  
15 look at the experience and what it means to keep  
16 experienced attorneys in our office.

17 LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: I just want to put some  
18 actual like hard numbers. You heard \$100 million for  
19 salaries- would get us 200,000 starting point, maybe  
20 a little more which is what we really need, but also  
21 help us get raises across the years and including  
also our supervisors and other people to train all  
the new people, but I think there probably needs to  
be about another \$50 million, I'm guessing.

1  
2 And again, none of us really know, but if you're  
3 asking for a specific number, we- when this RFP comes  
4 out, it probably needs to have exactly what it, you  
5 know, what it's currently funded at, which is hard  
6 for any of us to glean out of the budget. Let's be  
7 real about it. Plus \$150 million, and that should be  
8 part of the procurement process where each of us can  
9 then go to MOCJ and explain exactly how we plan to  
10 use the money that, you know, we need to do this, and  
11 I feel like if that amount got into our, you know,  
12 into the flow, it could make a really big difference.

11 JUVAL SCOTT: And I would just tag onto that.  
12 I'd be remiss if I didn't just note that the \$100,000  
13 figure that they're tossing out is the floor, not the  
14 ceiling. That's still too low. I just want to make  
15 sure that I'm crystal clear there, and also when  
16 we're making the comparison to prosecutors salary  
17 city, attorney salaries, keep in mind that what we-  
18 you know, our- the pension that they get, we don't  
19 get.

18 So it's still not parity. Even if the salaries  
19 were the exact same or even a little bit more,  
20 they're still not parity. The benefits that you get  
21 in working for the city are distinctly different, and

1  
2 so I just want to be clear. We're here asking for a  
3 lot of money. We're going to keep asking for money  
4 until it's fair.

5 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Would all of you mind sharing  
6 the- I guess the starting salary for, I guess, a  
7 lawyer at your office? What's the general starting  
8 salary or ballpark? I know for legal services it was  
9 like \$70-80,000 for those that passed-

10 STAN GERMAN: [interposing] Yeah, right now this  
11 year we're at \$88,000.

12 TINA LUONGO: A law graduate waiting to be  
13 admitted starts at \$84,000.

14 LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: I think my office is right  
15 at \$90, because we actually gave people raises last  
16 year, and you know, and for -what other things like  
17 space in order to do that.

18 PIYALI BASAK: We're also at \$84,000 and also  
19 we'll be bargaining this year.

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Has the- I guess the  
21 retention issue or lack of funding issue, has that  
led to inability to properly handle cases, including  
giving them the time and attention that they deserve,  
including on criminal cases?

1  
2 Obviously, people have their- defendants have the  
3 right to- constitutional right to a lawyer. So what  
4 are some of the effects that this has had on that?

5 STAN GERMAN: I mean, to be clear, no client has  
6 shouldered the burden of our burnout. The folks who  
7 shouldered the burden are the attorneys and the  
8 social workers who remain in the offices who then  
9 have to step up and get that work done.

10 And so, Tina just alluded to it. You have an  
11 attorney who's at five years with 70 cases. That  
12 person leaves, right, those cases have to be  
13 reassigned. They're assigned in some cases to  
14 supervisors, other attorneys, and then their  
15 caseloads just went up.

16 So the work is absolutely being done in all our  
17 offices. It's being done at an extremely high level,  
18 but the cost is the increasing burnout of our staff,  
19 and you just alluded to it.

20 Then we get younger. We have to train all over  
21 again, and we're just- it's like bailing water, you  
know, out of a sinking ship. We're just always  
struggling to get above board. But client  
representation and the work always gets done.

1  
2 PIYALI BASAK: Just to add to that, I think what  
3 we're seeing is, again, attorneys leaving about years  
4 five, six, seven out, who are starting families who  
5 cannot afford the public defender salary to support  
6 their families.

7 It's not just, you know, cases being transferred.  
8 It's a mentorship that gets offered, and it's so  
9 critical as part of the training. It's sometimes  
10 supervisors themselves which that is so hard to  
11 replace. We have to train to become a supervisor,  
12 but they cannot stay on even with the salary bumps  
13 that they get which is, you know, frankly not  
14 substantial.

15 We need- we would like to do better. So, it is-  
16 that is a huge loss for our offices to have  
17 experience and sharing that experience among the  
18 staff, because that's where people learn from.

19 JUVAL SCOTT: I would quickly add along to that,  
20 one of the trends that you see in public defense at  
21 about that mark is that you start to lose a lot of  
the attorneys of color.

So, Black attorneys, Black male attorneys in  
particular as they want to start families, but other  
attorneys of color really can't afford to stay in

1  
2 public defense, and so it becomes an equity issue. It  
3 creates- it really creates a situation where you have  
4 no pipeline of Black and Brown people to become  
5 supervisors and mentors in offices to ascend to  
6 leadership to be able to take on the mantle. And so  
7 when you have new, young attorneys of color, people  
8 of color come into the office and there's no  
9 leadership that looks like them, they don't have- you  
10 know, you don't see yourself, right, in the  
11 leadership, and so you don't really see that pathway.  
12 You don't see the longevity in the field, and what  
13 that means in the Bronx especially where the bulk of  
14 our clients are, you know, Black and Brown, it means  
15 that our- the people that we serve don't see people  
16 who look like them representing them.

17 And so it becomes an information gap of sorts.  
18 There are things culturally that get lost because,  
19 you know, the attorneys don't necessarily relate to  
20 the people that we serve, and then also those  
21 conversations are missing in an office.

And so, I just want to highlight that equity  
issue as well, because it's important. I think it's  
something that gets overlooked a lot.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. Has the staffing and  
3 retention issue created issues related to  
4 case-related delays? For example, lawyers not having  
5 enough time. They have to adjourn, so a criminal  
6 case gets adjourned, delayed and then adjourned again  
and delayed?

7 TINA LUONGO: Yeah, it's very similar to what we  
8 spoke about. One, you have to now assume a colleague  
9 who left caseload. You now have that burden. And  
10 what happens? As much as you try not to, you have to  
11 now triage. You also- it has the effect on the  
person who is now- who's the client.

12 They built a relationship with somebody in a  
13 situation may I say, where trust is not given often  
14 because there should be mistrust because this person  
15 is accused and being prosecuted. And we are paid,  
16 right, by the same government that is prosecuting  
them.

17 So building trust is something that our staff has  
18 to work very hard to do. And now you are held at  
19 Rikers and you get a visit and it's a different  
20 attorney than you know and now trust, and now it  
21 starts all over again.

1  
2       So you have actual what we call case processing  
3 issues, but more importantly, you have real value  
4 issues there that we have to address in New York  
5 City. And I want to say just one more thing about  
6 sort of what the effect of attrition is.

7       So everybody might say, like, okay, well you lose  
8 a lawyer at step five who is a fully-certified  
9 attorney, just put a posting up and fill the role.  
10 It's not going to happen. Here's why. First of all,  
11 it's like what I call rearranging the chairs on the  
12 Titanic. Because if I put a posting up, guess who's  
13 offices they might be coming from, my colleagues, who  
14 then put a posting up, and guess what happens? They  
15 come from my office. Because the reality is we're  
16 not getting anybody who is an experienced criminal  
17 defense attorney coming out of the private sector to  
18 join our offices. Why? Because the city and the  
19 state raised the assigned counsel hourly rate to \$156  
20 an hour.

21       And so, in fact, I have lost people to the panel.  
I just received a resignation yesterday of a lawyer  
that started with me in 2002, has worked her entire  
career in the Bronx office, my Bronx office, who's  
leaving to become a member of the Bronx Assigned

1  
2 Counsel, what we call 18B panel, because she has to  
3 make more money for her family. That- I'm going to  
4 post for that job. I am not- I promise you, I'm not  
5 going to find somebody to apply, and that is the  
6 reality of attrition.

6 LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: I totally agree with all of  
7 that, and also add that if you do get people from  
8 other jurisdictions, there's also a lot of training  
9 that has to go into that. It's not as  
10 straightforward as somebody that already knows New  
11 York and New York City procedures and policies. But  
12 I did want to say that, you know, we heard from- you  
13 asked a lot of questions today about ATIs and we  
14 heard from DAs a lot about, you know, how cases are  
15 resolved and all the things that all of us in the  
16 criminal legal system are trying to do. And I want  
17 to just say that 90-something percent of our cases  
18 are resolved through plea bargaining, and most of the  
19 work that's done on plea bargaining is done on our  
20 side of things.

18 It is unusual for a DA just to pick up the phone  
19 and call you and say would you take this or that.  
20 Usually we are the ones to call and say hey, you  
21 know, can we take a look at this case together? I

1  
2 have some information for you. I have something of  
3 value. My client expressed to me, you know, that he  
4 is using drugs and he'd like to stop, and so can we  
5 work it out? And when you have a large caseload, it  
6 becomes very, very difficult to find the time to find  
7 those little issues or bigger issues and then make  
8 that phone call or, you know, email the DA and work  
9 it out.

10 And if you want to know what the case processing  
11 problem is, that's where it is. It's probably not  
12 ultimately on, you know, whether you review the  
13 discovery or you're ready for trial if you move to  
14 trial. It is almost definitely in the delay before  
15 you really have the chance to sit down and really  
16 think about what can really work and who can I call  
17 to try to make that work.

18 And you heard- you know, I'm a Brooklyn  
19 practitioner. Our Brooklyn office, our DAs office  
20 has for really generations been doing a lot of work  
21 around drug treatment, mental health treatment.

We can get those deals, but we have to have  
doctors looking at our clients. We need social  
workers involved, and the bigger the case load, the  
harder it is to do these really nuanced pieces that

1  
2 ultimately resolve cases, and when they get resolved  
3 it quickens up the system a little bit and makes room  
4 for, you know, trials and for people to maybe get out  
5 of Rikers Island and reduce that population as well.  
6 So, I think that's a piece that really needs to be  
7 thought about.

8 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. And I think my final  
9 question- last year, the Mayor's Office of Criminal  
10 Justice, their budget included a baseline increase of  
11 \$20.4 million for public defenders. Has the offices  
12 seen these funds? And also, if yes, what are areas  
13 that this funding went towards?

14 STAN GERMAN: So, I'm assuming that was part of  
15 the new needs ask we had put in request for what our  
16 new needs would be for fiscal year '26. I know in  
17 our case, some of the positions that were filled is-  
18 was a diversion attorney.

19 So, again, this ATI theme. Once a case is  
20 resolved by plea and the person is placed in  
21 diversion court, that really is almost the beginning  
of the case, because it could take anywhere from 12  
to 18 to 24 months to actually get that person into a  
program and then graduated from the program.

1  
2 So, we set up a scenario where once the plea is  
3 taken, the case would actually be transferred to an  
4 attorney or a group of attorneys that's dedicated  
5 just to working with diversion clients in the  
6 diversion court. We also put some of that money  
7 toward our homicide team. Our homicide funding had  
8 remained flat for seven years, and so we made an  
9 additional hire there as well.

10 TINA LUONGO: Some of that went to technology.  
11 It was alluded to earlier today about discovery and  
12 sort of, you know, discovery management systems.

13 I also think that might have included monies  
14 through an RFP process and for new needs in the  
15 appeals process, in the appeals practice which are  
16 separate organizations with the exception of Legal  
17 Aid. We have an appellate office, but there are  
18 separate appellate provider nonprofits throughout  
19 this city. And so I think that might include some  
20 of that additional money there.

21 LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: Similar types of things.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay.

STAN GERMAN: I would just say what we weren't  
able to do is just take that money and just give

1  
2 raises to our staff. So, we had more staff at the  
3 same kind of bad pay.

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Okay. And final question.  
5 What are some of the most effective ATI programs that  
6 you usually work with? ATI and also reentry,  
7 pre-incarceration? What are some of the programs  
8 that most stand out on the issue of violence, and  
9 especially gun violence?

10 STAN GERMAN: So, Council Member Nurse talked  
11 about Harbor House. Harbor House is a great program.  
12 They've got the capacity for 50 new beds. We  
13 absolutely need to make that happen. I think she  
14 said it was only \$3 million. They're one of the few,  
15 if not the only inpatient program that takes folks  
16 with SMIs, serious mental illness. So, Harbor House  
17 is definitely one that stands out for me.

18 TINA LUONGO: I think you're likely going to hear  
19 from many, many organizations that are sitting here  
20 waiting to testify that are incredible, incredible  
21 providers of service, but you did talk about- you did  
talk about those that do violence prevention, and I  
can't not talk about, and I'm sure she's going to  
talk about, because I see Erica Ford [sp?] in the

1 audience. Our crisis management providers at the  
2 grassroots levels.

3 We have had a longstanding relationship as part  
4 of the Cure Violence Crisis Management system since  
5 it was started when it was Council Member Jumaane  
6 Williams and not Public Advocate Jumaane Williams.  
7 When you think about proactive approaches to  
8 violence, particularly working with young people, and  
9 the way in which our offices and our teams work with  
10 those community organizations, that is the answer to  
11 not- not rolling back Raise the Age and not looking  
12 at state law change and reforms.

13 It is about providing the services on the ground  
14 by those who know what it means to be proactive and  
15 what the community needs. And so our ATIs, all of  
16 them- all these programs that should have- again,  
17 will come here and ask for money, and they should be  
18 funded fully, because we cannot do what we do without  
19 them to sustain folks in community, because the real  
20 answer is proactively funding things before somebody  
21 gets into a criminal legal system is also part of  
what we should all be working toward.

LISA SCHREIBERSDORF: I just want to also add  
without getting into individual programming, because

1  
2 so many of them are so wonderful. The most- the more  
3 diverse the programming is, the more successful it  
4 will be, because one of the best indicators of  
5 success is if somebody gets into a program that's  
6 culturally appropriate, speaks their language, and  
7 meets their actual needs.

8 So, that's why we have so many, and it's really  
9 hard to say. For the person that needs- for a young  
10 person that needs services, a program that provides  
11 services to young people is going to be better, you  
12 know, for somebody who's older might need a different  
13 kind of programming, somebody who has a mental  
14 illness or, you know, so to the extent that we can  
15 really think very critically about the more diversity  
16 of programming that we have- one size does not fit  
17 all at all, and I think that you heard that from the  
18 DA's offices that they try to use different programs.

19 Having said that, people that are specific-  
20 organizations that are specifically equipped to work  
21 with people who have been incarcerated or have faced  
incarceration either before they ever go to jail,  
while they're in jail, or after jail are in my  
opinion the ones that we should focus the most on,  
because a population of people that have experienced

1  
2 a kind of a trauma, a kind of experience and  
3 something that's going to impact them for a long time  
4 time, and the knowledge of that and the ability to  
5 work through that is really critical.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Sounds good. So, I  
7 don't have any more questions. Does anybody have  
8 questions? Alright, thank you so much for joining us  
9 today and for all the information. I look forward to  
10 working together with all of you on all the issues.

11 STAN GERMAN: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright, so next we're going  
13 to hear from some of the union representatives: Jane  
14 Fox from UAW 2325, Donald Nesbit from DC37, Tabitha  
15 Sheppard, DC37, Olivia Duong, DC37. Thank you for  
16 joining us. Going to provide two minutes for every  
17 person testifying. You may begin whenever you're  
18 ready.

19 JANE FOX: Hi, good afternoon. Thank you for the  
20 opportunity to speak. My name is Jane Fox and I'm  
21 the Chair of the Legal Aid Society Attorney's Chapter  
at the Association of Legal Advocates and Attorneys,  
and we are UAW Local 2325. We represent over 3,700  
active and retired legal services workers at over 30  
nonprofit organizations in New York City and beyond.

1  
2 We are attorneys, paralegals, social workers,  
3 investigators, and support staff. And our union  
4 members keep clients in their communities and outside  
5 of jails, keep families together, keep clients  
6 housed, and make sure New Yorkers have access to  
7 vital social services.

8 We are the workers who guarantee community  
9 safety. And while our members are an essential labor  
10 force, decades of underfunding have led to untenable  
11 working conditions, and this underfunding has  
12 persisted despite our members providing  
13 constitutionally-mandated legal representation.

14 We have an attrition crisis and a workload  
15 crisis, and this Council needs to start paying  
16 attention to this crisis, because when we leave, New  
17 Yorkers who depend on us for justice suffer. Our  
18 message is simple. Our fight for increased funding  
19 has one guiding light. Working class New Yorkers  
20 deserve the same level of representation as rich New  
21 Yorkers. But year after year, this city and this  
council has found money to keep police officers and  
District Attorneys in their jobs, guarantee them a  
pension while at the same time our union members have  
been pushed out, told they are not worthy of an

1  
2 affordable wage or a dignified retirement, because of  
3 the people we represent every day.

4 But you can support us and our clients, your very  
5 own constituents, with your budget choices. You can  
6 support labor by ensuring there is enough money  
7 flowing so that when we get to the bargaining table  
8 with our employers, we can settle fair contracts.  
9 And this year, over 2,000 of our members will be  
10 bargaining including all of the criminal trials  
11 providers, the Legal Aid Attorneys Chapter, Bronx  
12 Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, and  
13 Neighborhood Defenders.

14 And if I may just wrap up. In fiscal year 2027  
15 we're asking the Council to fully fund legal services  
16 so our employers can meet our core bargaining demands  
17 on compensation and retirement, and our costing  
18 estimates that the city will need to increase funding  
19 by a minimum of \$80 million across the legal services  
20 sector for our members.

21 As you heard from our employers, they estimate  
\$100 million, because their ask includes non-union  
staff. We are not siloed to just criminal trials  
work. This funding will also cover our members  
providing families, civil, and immigration

1 representation along other city contracts. And just  
2 to note, this \$80 million is in addition to what has  
3 already been guaranteed in the Preliminary Budget.  
4 Our members are not immune from the affordability  
5 crisis, austerity budgets and legal services hurt our  
6 union and they hurt New Yorkers, and settling fair  
7 contracts will provide stability and ensure working  
8 class New Yorkers get the absolute best legal  
9 representation, because they deserve nothing less.  
10 Thank you.

11 DONALD NESBIT: Good afternoon, Chairman Feliz  
12 and distinguished members of the Council. It's an  
13 honor to be here. My name is Donald Nesbit,  
14 Executive Vice President for Local 372 representing  
15 our school crossing guards, level one's and level  
16 two's within the New York City Department under the  
17 leadership of President Sean Francois [sp?]. We-  
18 Local 372 has long testified for the hiring of more  
19 school crossing guards. It's vital in order to keep  
20 our children safe from dangers of reckless drivers  
21 and to ensure the school crossing guard members  
themselves are not stretched thin and are safe  
themselves.

1  
2 Student pedestrians also face major safety  
3 traffic hazards every day while going to and from  
4 school. This risk is not only a health, safety, and  
5 their lives, they perform- they put everything on the  
6 line, our school crossing guards. We get calls from  
7 community advocates, from CECs and from school  
8 principals who often send parent coordinators, school  
9 aides, and others in the school building to make sure  
10 there's safety, because there is no school crossing  
11 guard on their corner.

12 In 2023, Mayor Adams authorized the elimination  
13 of 500 open school crossing guard positions. We are  
14 respectfully requesting that those are- that those  
15 lines are reinstated and maintained. There has been  
16 a number of casualties since then. Christina  
17 Napawosk [sp?] school crossing guard was tragically  
18 killed on Woodhaven and Atlantic Avenue.

19 October 20th, 2023, eight-year-old student five  
20 blocks away from his school in Queens, tragically  
21 killed. An 11-year-old girl in Brooklyn tragically  
killed. No school crossing guard. By eliminating  
those positions we send a message to the public that  
our children are not as important. Throughout the  
couple of years there has been coverage of violence

1  
2 against transit workers also. The Governor  
3 implement- and the Council implemented different  
4 measures to protect safety for these transit workers,  
5 but what's not heard is the risk that school crossing  
6 guards while protecting our children incur while  
7 trying to stop cars who are speeding and those who  
8 are reckless drivers.

9 We want to push for more school crossing guards.  
10 On snow days and days where schools are closed, these  
11 same individuals are not paid. I mean, so this leads  
12 to where they have to determine if there's a natural  
13 disaster or something happens, determine whether they  
14 can pay their bills that pay period, our school  
15 crossing guards.

16 And so we respectfully request that they be  
17 treated similar to DOE support staff, even though  
18 they work for the Police Department, they work  
19 closely with our schools. And we just thank you for  
20 the opportunity to testify before the Council.

21 OLIVIA DUONG: Hello, good afternoon, Chair Feliz  
and Council Member Phil Wong. My name is Olivia  
Duong. I am President of Local 3778 of District  
Council 37, representing 300 civilian NYPD

1 professional titles such as criminalists, data  
2 research scientists, architects.

3 I'm here to highlight the urgent need for a new  
4 facility for our hardworking forensic scientists or  
5 criminalists at the NYPD police laboratory. We work  
6 in the NYPD Detective Bureau and provide- analyze  
7 different types of evidence involved in alleged  
8 crimes such as drugs, latent finger prints, gunshot  
9 residue, firearms using accredited scientific  
10 methods.

11 We provide investigative information to  
12 detectives and the District Attorneys across all five  
13 boroughs as well as the federal government.  
14 Criminalists also testify in court as expert  
15 witnesses. Our testimony educates juries to make  
16 informed and fair verdicts.

17 The need for an updated forensic laboratory  
18 building is very long overdue. Currently, there are  
19 just under 400 employees working in forensic  
20 chemistry, firearms analysis, and crime scene units  
21 out of a five-story building in Queens built in 1930.  
Originally a department store refitted as a college  
university, and currently a chemical laboratory,  
firing range, and office building all in one. The

1  
2 current facility is outdated and in a constant state  
3 of repair and disrepair. Millions of dollars have  
4 been put in and continue to be put in just to ensure  
5 that the roof does not leak. Our operations have  
6 long outgrown the space provided for our testing  
needs.

7 We are working out of laboratory spaces where  
8 there are 16 to 20 people in a room, constant flow of  
9 traffic around our fume hoods. Let me wrap up- where  
10 hazardous chemicals are being used. Our workers  
11 deserve a state-of-the-art facility with ventilated  
spaces where we can handle bulk powder evidence of  
12 unknown origin and safe spaces to test live firearms.

13 I ask the committee to ensure that this is put  
14 into the NYPD capital budget on behalf of the civil  
15 servants who are rarely seen or heard of, but make a  
16 profound impact to public safety in New York City.  
17 In spite of the many facility challenges we face, my  
18 colleagues have strived to maintain the highest  
quality and integrity of their forensic work for the  
citizens of New York City every day.

19 Chair Feliz, I'll submit a more detailed version  
20 of my testimony for the record, and thank you for the  
opportunity to speak today.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so much  
3 for your testimony. Next, we'll call our  
4 organizations with the great work on the issue of  
5 violence prevention, Reverend Wendy from the Urban  
6 Youth Alliance Inc., Megan French-Marcelin from the  
7 New York ATI Coalition, Nadia from CASES, Lily  
8 Shapiro from ATI Reentry Coalition, Madeline Hopper  
9 from the Women's Prison Association, Isabel  
10 Greenberg, Center for Employment Opportunities.  
11  
12 Alright.

13 MEGAN FRENCH-MARCELIN: Thank you, Chairman Feliz  
14 and members of the Committee. My name is Megan  
15 French-Marcelin. Today, I testify on behalf of the  
16 New York City Alternatives to Incarceration and  
17 Reentry Coalition.

18 We are a network of 12 service organizations with  
19 decades of experience in providing community-based  
20 supports to justice-involved New Yorkers.

21 In fiscal year '25, our organization served more  
than 68,000 New York City residents. I sit before  
you as providers face \$4.6 million in cuts to ATI and  
reentry services in the Preliminary Budget. This is  
despite what we know about the role these programs  
play in shoring up public safety.

1  
2 For many decades, the vast majority of the  
3 state's incarcerated population hailed from just  
4 seven neighborhoods in New York City. That trend has  
5 shifted with the enrichment of services that our  
6 coalition provides. Studies routinely show that  
7 where neighborhoods invest in community-based  
8 providers, crime, even serious crime drops  
9 dramatically.

10 Research also demonstrates that these programs  
11 are more successful than incarceration at improving  
12 public safety outcomes, decreasing the chance of  
13 future convictions, reducing homelessness and  
14 psychiatric hospitalizations, and inspiring civic  
15 engagement.

16 Their price point is also much lower. The cost  
17 of incarcerating one person on Rikers for one year is  
18 over \$500,000. For that, approximately 50 New  
19 Yorkers could be taken through life-transforming  
20 programming. This year, we are asking the  
21 administration for the restoration and expansion of  
funding for ATIs and reentry services, a \$24.6  
million increase from what is proposed in the  
Preliminary Budget.

1  
2 From the City Council, we are requesting an  
3 additional \$2.4 million increase in the Alternatives  
4 to Incarceration Discretionary Fund across our 12  
5 organizations. These funds have been critical for  
6 our programs and the communities we serve. Thank  
7 you.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

8 LILY SHAPIRO: Good afternoon, Chair Feliz and  
9 members of the Committee. My name is Lily Shapiro,  
10 and I'm Policy Counsel for the Fortune Society's  
11 David Rothenberg Center for Public Policy. Thank you  
12 for the opportunity to testify about our work and  
13 about how ATI and reentry programs are essential in  
14 promoting public safety and assistance while  
15 empowering people to successfully rebuild their  
16 lives.

17 In fiscal year 25, Fortune served more than  
18 18,000 New Yorkers through our broad array of  
19 programs including employment services, mental health  
20 and substance use treatment, and our continuum of  
21 housing, and this includes the more than 1,000 people  
we serve through our ATI programs.

Every day, we see how comprehensive  
community-based programming and interventions can

1  
2 change lives, break cycles of involvement in the  
3 justice system and create safer communities for all  
4 of us, which is why we are proud to be a member of  
5 the New York City ATI Reentry Coalition, and  
6 therefore we're requesting that the administration  
7 restore and expand funding for ATI and reentry  
8 services an increase of \$24.6 million above what is  
9 proposed in the Preliminary Budget, and we also  
10 request an increase of \$2.4 million in the Council's  
11 Alternatives to Incarceration and Reentry Programs  
12 initiative.

13 We are very grateful that the Council stood with  
14 us in preventing our funding from being cut in fiscal  
15 year '26 and urge the Council to stand with us again  
16 not just to prevent cuts, but to ensure increases to  
17 support expansion of this collective work.

18 In fiscal year '25, 83 percent of our  
19 participants successfully completed their ATI  
20 program, and 92 percent of participants, many of whom  
21 are youth and young adults, successfully completed  
gun diversion programming. And the successes behind  
these statistics are best illustrated by the  
remarkable participants whose stories are detailed in  
my written testimony.

1  
2 I also want to highlight our court navigator  
3 program in partnership with the Manhattan DA's office  
4 which in fiscal year '25 allowed us to provide  
5 immediate resources voluntarily to over 1,000 people,  
6 complete full intakes with over 1,100 people and even  
house 33 people.

7 These are people walking out of arraignments with  
8 no court obligations at that time, and this is all on  
9 a voluntary basis. This is a program that should be  
10 scaled up. Thank you so much for the opportunity to  
11 testify today about these critical services and  
12 supports.

13 REVEREND WENDY CALDERONE-PAYNE: I'm not going to  
14 speak that fast, but I am going to try. I was like,  
15 how is she doing this? Sorry. Okay. Thank you,  
16 Chairman Feliz and the members of the Committee.  
17 It's nice to see you.

18 My name is Reverend Wendy Calderone-Payne and I'm  
19 the Executive Director of Urban Youth Alliance. Many  
20 of you guys know us as Bronx Connect and Release the  
21 Grip [sic] and we are actually in your neighborhood,  
Chairman Feliz.

We're a longstanding member of the ATI Coalition.  
Our organization provides alternatives to young

1  
2 people, adults, families who are system-impacted and  
3 many are court-involved and under court supervision,  
4 and we are actually indigenous. We came up from the  
5 community, and for over a decade, close to two  
6 decades- for over a decade we were the only people  
7 placing services in the Bronx.

8 Our position is simple, public safety and public  
9 health are not competing goals. Over two decades of  
10 experience have shown us that the fastest way to  
11 reduce recidivism is to help young people stabilize  
12 their lives and connect them to community.

13 New York City's thriving ATI justice movement has  
14 demonstrated that creating safer neighborhoods  
15 requires high-touch relationships alongside concrete  
16 opportunities such as workforce training, stipends,  
17 job placements, partnerships, and credible messengers  
18 who can speak to our young people from where they  
19 have actually walked.

20 Our Bronx Connect program uses things like  
21 restorative justice and cognitive behavioral  
approaches to bridge these significant gaps. We have  
a tremendous success rate. 97 percent of our  
graduates in our high felony program go three years

1  
2 without a felony reconviction, and that is a national  
3 high average.

4 We know that these programs are effective. We  
5 know that all of our programs are effective which is  
6 why we created the landscape of youth services for  
7 young people with juvenile and criminal legal system  
8 involvement.

9 I really hope that you guys read it because it's  
10 rich with information. We are asking for expanded  
11 family court alternatives to detention programs, \$30  
12 million. Development and promotion of new programs  
13 that connect youth to year-round employment, that's  
14 the Asvep [sp?] program for the Cure Violence, \$3.1  
15 million, and we'd love you to double the  
16 court-involved youth mental health program because  
17 that has been an excellent program. Thank you so  
18 much for allowing me to testify.

19 NADIA CHAIT: Good afternoon, Chair Feliz. I'm  
20 Nadia Chait, I'm the Senior Director of Policy and  
21 Advocacy at CASES. We serve over 12,000 New Yorkers  
annually, including over 2,000 who've avoided  
incarceration through participation in our ATI  
programs. And I second my colleague's requests for

1  
2 \$24.6 million in city funding and an additional \$2.4  
3 million in the Council's ATI funds.

4 Several of our ATIs focus on serving folks with  
5 serious mental illness and helping them get the care  
6 that they need in the community instead of being  
7 incarcerated. In our Nathaniel Act program which is  
8 our most intensive service, we find that among our  
9 clients, none are reconvicted of a violent felony,  
10 and less than five percent are reconvicted of any  
11 felony. The program decreases homelessness by 70  
12 percent and cuts psychiatric hospitalizations in half  
13 which is a remarkable success for folks who in many  
14 cases have been dealing with persistent mental  
15 illness for decades without having access to the  
16 treatment that they need and the support that they  
17 need.

18 At the other end of the spectrum is New Start  
19 which is a much less intensive ATI that's designed to  
20 be a rapid intervention for people with low-level  
21 offenses. I want to share what one of our clients  
recently shared with us. He said, I am so surprised  
at myself.

Today, I feel like staying clean. In fact, I  
want to help others with sobriety. Someone helped me

1  
2 stay clean, and now I want to give that to others in  
3 my community. And that's really the success of our  
4 programs in action is people seeing not only the  
5 benefit of having their own lives, but wanting to  
6 share that with others.

7 We're also one of the intensive case management  
8 pilot sites, and we urge the Council to maintain full  
9 funding for the pilot which is serving several  
10 hundred folks annually. And I'll very quickly  
11 highlight one client's case, an individual who came  
12 into the program a few years after her husband was  
13 unfortunately tragically murdered in front of her  
14 which led her to developmental health challenges, to  
15 abuse alcohol, and to become street homeless.

16 Since her connection into ICM and particularly  
17 with a peer specialist, she has actually now been  
18 approved for an intensive mobile treatment team to  
19 receive the mental health services that they need.  
20 She has connected to stable housing and she's  
21 receiving substance use treatment. Thank you.

MADELINE HOPPER: Good afternoon. My name is  
Madeline Hopper and I'm representing the Women's  
Prison Association. Thank you, Chair Feliz, for the  
opportunity to testify. For 181 years, the Women's

1  
2 Prison Association has been a force for change,  
3 supporting system-impacted women across every borough  
4 and at every stage of their engagement with the  
5 justice system.

6 Decades of direct service show us this. Real  
7 public safety doesn't come from locking women up. It  
8 comes from stable housing, access to effective social  
9 services and deep community connections. For many  
10 women, system involvement is not the result of a  
11 single incident, but of systemic failures, poverty,  
12 housing instability, and trauma.

13 Women enter the criminal legal system with  
14 complex unmet needs and incarceration exacerbates  
15 these challenges. When women return home from  
16 incarceration, they encounter a reentry system that  
17 is underfunded and underequipped.

18 Last year, 60 percent of the women we served in  
19 our reentry program lacked stable housing upon  
20 intake. WPA envisions a different path. By meeting  
21 women and gender-expansive people where they are, we  
address root causes through individualized diversion  
and reentry programs that combine wrap-around case  
management, safe and stable housing, and  
trauma-informed, gender-responsive clinical care.

1  
2 These supports stabilize women, strengthen families,  
3 and enhance public safety.

4 Programs like our work. They reduce recidivism  
5 and cost a fraction of what the city spends on the  
6 ineffective and inhumane approach represented by  
7 Rikers Island.

8 This year, we are asking the administration for  
9 the restoration and expansion of funding for ATI and  
10 reentry services at MOCJ, a \$24.6 million increase  
11 from what is proposed. From the Council, the ATI and  
12 Reentry Coalition is requesting an additional \$2.4  
13 million increase in the ATI and Reentry program  
14 initiatives across our 12 organizations.

15 In addition, WPA seeks additional discretionary  
16 funding to expand key mental health and housing  
17 services and meet the need for an innovative  
18 mother-centered diversion pilot on Rikers Island. In  
19 closing, system-impacted women's needs are unique and  
20 our responses must be too. When we support them,  
21 families thrive and communities are safer. Thank  
you.

ISABEL GREENBERG: Can you hear me? Okay. Good  
afternoon, Chair Feliz and committee members. My  
name is Isabel Greenberg and I'm a Policy and

1  
2 Business Development Associate with the Center for  
3 Employment Opportunities, CEO, and I want to thank  
4 the committee for holding this hearing today. I'm  
5 submitting this testimony on behalf of the CEO and  
6 the ATI Coalition to highlight the critical length  
7 between reentry resources and long-term public safety  
8 of our city.

9 CEO's mission is to provide immediate, effective,  
10 and comprehensive employment services to individuals  
11 recently returning home from incarceration. As the  
12 largest provider of reentry employment services in  
13 New York, we serve individuals on probation and  
14 parole supervision with the highest risk of  
15 recidivism, and have served over 47,000 New Yorkers  
16 since 1996.

17 Independent evaluations show that for every one  
18 dollar of public investment into our program, \$3.30  
19 is returned, and our program reduces recidivism by 22  
20 percent and increases employment rates by 52 percent.  
21 Justice-involved individuals are at highest risk  
immediately following release.

By providing immediate transitional employment,  
CEO stabilizes individuals during this critical time.  
CEO partners with 10 City Council Members to provide

1  
2 cleanup and beautification services to their  
3 districts. Individuals returning to the five  
4 boroughs have the opportunity to find immediate  
5 employment and reinvest in the communities they call  
6 home. CEO applied for FY '27 City Council  
7 discretionary and supplemental funding to support our  
8 reentry employment model, transitional work group  
9 program, and expand our barrier removal and  
10 supportive services.

11 While our primary focus is employment, we  
12 recognize that public safety is built on a foundation  
13 of stability. CEO's mental health and housing  
14 assistance referrals such as for my colleagues act as  
15 a safety net that prevents lapses in stability that  
16 often lead to re-arrest. We work closely with the  
17 Department of Probation as a key referral partners  
18 and our contract with DOP funds transitional work  
19 crews throughout the city.

20 CEO is also a part of this ATI Reentry Coalition,  
21 and with additional financial backing we can scale  
these community-based programs and provide essential  
support to New Yorkers returning home from  
incarceration and achieve a safer New York City. So,  
thank you so much.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Alright. Thank you everybody  
3 for your testimony. All of you answered my question  
4 which was going to be, you know, what unit would you  
5 expand, how much would it cost and why, but all of  
6 you answered it.

7 So, I really appreciate all the information you  
8 provided. Thank you so much for joining today.  
9 Thank you. Alright, so now we're going to move onto  
10 our next panel. Let's see. Going to hear from C.G.,  
11 Erica Ford, Hailey Nolasco, Messiah Ramkisson, Asa  
12 Meta [sp?], Edwin Santana. Thank you so much. Guess  
13 we could start from the right side towards the left,  
14 and everybody gets two minutes. Thank you.

15 ASA META: Good evening, Chair Feliz and members  
16 of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Asa Meta  
17 and I'm testifying on behalf of Common Justice, a New  
18 York City organization that operates one of the  
19 nation's first alternatives to incarceration programs  
20 for serious violent felonies. If we want safer  
21 communities in New York City, we must invest in  
strategies that actually reduce violence and support  
healing for those most impacted. For too long, our  
primary response to violence has been incarceration  
even though we know that incarceration alone does

1  
2 little to address the root causes of harm or to  
3 support the people and the communities affected by  
4 it. True public safety requires approaches that  
5 center accountability, survivor healing, and  
6 long-term stability.

7 Common Justice works in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and  
8 Manhattan with people facing significant prison  
9 sentences for violent crimes, as well as the  
10 survivors of those crimes. With the consent of the  
11 person harmed, these cases are diverted into a  
12 Restorative Justice process that centers survivor  
13 needs while requiring the responsible party to take  
14 meaningful accountability. Participants complete an  
15 intensive 12 to 15 month program that includes  
16 violence intervention, restorative justice dialogue,  
17 education, and employment support and ongoing  
18 supervision.

19 This model advances public safety while reducing  
20 our reliance on incarceration. Programs like Common  
21 Justice cost significantly less than incarceration on  
Rikers Island and produce strong outcomes for both  
survivors and responsible parties. Instead of  
relying on a system that too often fails to address  
the root causes of violence, we invest in

1  
2 community-based responses that help people access  
3 housing, employment and support in the neighborhoods  
4 where they live.

5 For these reasons, we urge the Council to  
6 continue and expand investments in alternatives to  
7 incarceration and other community-based responses to  
8 violence. These programs hold people accountable,  
9 support survivors and strengthen public safety while  
10 reducing the city's needs on- the city's reliance on  
11 incarceration. Thank you for your time.

12 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

13 C. GLOVER: Good afternoon Mr. Feliz. My name is  
14 C. Glover. I'm afraid to even tell you my full name,  
15 and I'm all covered up, because this was a police  
16 hearing. Tisch, Commissioner Tisch was here. I am  
17 scared to death of the Police Department. I live in  
18 East Harlem and we are severely policed in my  
19 development, my NYCHA development. I know this is  
20 about budget hearing, but I fellow down here when I  
21 saw Tisch on the TV, because we- I'm scared to death.  
I live in Washington Houses, and I asked the office  
why is there so many police. He says, oh- what is  
that when they get overtime? He said, oh, well we  
here on overtime. Meanwhile you outside the

1  
2 development when all the drug dealing is going on in  
3 the building. That's number one. Number two, I am  
4 so- this Trump administration, we all are severely  
5 under a lot of stress. Stress is killing us. I  
6 appreciate being able to testify today. I am scared  
7 to death.

8 The precinct, the 23rd precinct, PSA5, these  
9 people scare me to death. The Community Affairs,  
10 when you go to the meetings, are the presidents of  
11 the tenants associations, even though this is not a  
12 tenant association- this is not a NYCHA meeting. But  
13 you need to know this, because- and this is going to  
14 be recorded. The Community Affairs people they have  
15 these meetings. The only people that's there is who  
16 they invite, so these people are getting paid being  
17 on record. Maybe you got five or six tenant  
18 association presidents. The Community Center at  
19 Washington Houses is closed. Our tenant association  
20 has no meetings. They haven't had meetings in at  
21 least over two years.

22 So what used to happen is that the precinct, the  
23 PSA used to come to the centers every month to give  
24 statistics, etcetera, etcetera. They don't do it now  
25 because the community center is closed, and with the

1  
2 tenant association not having meetings, we are not  
3 getting the statistics. We're over-policed, severely  
4 over-policed. We have no voice. Ms- what is her  
5 name? Exception [sp?] who took Diana Ayala's  
6 position, her office on the 116th street between Park  
7 and Madison is not even filled out. There's no  
8 writing. Ayala's name was gone and now there's  
9 nothing there.

10 When I contacted her with issues, her office- her  
11 deputy tells me, oh, well, we're going to help you  
12 out. We don't- I says really? Everybody else is not  
13 doing anything. She says, oh, but we don't get paid  
14 by them. You know, we get paid by who we get paid  
15 by, so they can't chastise us. But yet, you haven't  
16 followed through. You haven't come through. You  
17 shifted the thing off to someone else and he has  
18 contacted me. So you want to talk about st- and I  
19 know my two minutes are up-

20 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Yes, and also if  
21 we could just stay on topic which is the budget with  
the NYPD-

19 C. GLOVER: [interposing] Yes, okay. Civilian  
20 Complaint Review Board, cancel it. They don't need  
21 to be budget. What you need to do is take that money

1  
2 and build some housing where people can afford to  
3 live in it, okay? The Police Department and since  
4 the officer told me, oh, we are all here on overtime.  
5 So, clearly they're getting enough money. So, maybe  
6 you can take what they get in overtime and give it to  
7 those public defender people. And I can go on and  
8 on.

9 I am scared to death. Just the fact that I'm  
10 here right now in my community because I'm not a drug  
11 dealer. They know what time I go to bed. They know  
12 that time I wake up. They know what time I'm on the  
13 toilet. They know what time I go to the supermarket.  
14 I'm not stupid. I know when I'm being followed,  
15 because I was a tenant leader once. That's when the  
16 following started. I want to know what is the Police  
17 Department going to do. All this money-

18 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Alright, please  
19 conclude.

20 C. GLOVER: And I know you're 100 percent right.  
21 All this money that everybody coming up here asking  
for that we need money for this- you know, it's just  
like water. If you utilize it properly-

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Alright, if we  
could just move to the next-

1  
2 C. GLOVER: It stretches. They asking for all  
3 this money, but they not putting the money- they're  
4 not utilizing it properly, and that's why nothing's  
5 getting done.

6 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

7 C. GLOVER: And I thank you, Mr. Feliz. Thank  
8 you, because I know I'm over time.

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you for your testimony.

10 C. GLOVER: Thank you, sir.

11 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

12 C. GLOVER: And you asked good questions, too,  
13 when you was talking to the DA people.

14 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. I try.

15 EDWIN SANTANA: Hello. Thank you, Chair Feliz  
16 and Council Members, for the opportunity to testify  
17 today. My name is Edwin Santana. I am a community  
18 organizer with Freedom Agenda. We're one of the  
19 organizations leading the Campaign to Close Rikers  
20 Island. I'm also a survivor of Rikers Island, a  
21 native New Yorker, and a resident of the Bronx. Our  
members are people who have been incarcerated and  
have family incarcerated, but they're also people who  
have been impacted by crime. They know what works to  
create real public safety. It's things like housing,

1 health care, work, opportunities, mentorship, and  
2 safe community spaces. At a cost of nearly half a  
3 million dollars per person per year, Rikers Island is  
4 the most expensive and least effective tool our city  
5 has to create community safety. Unfortunately, key  
6 investments to promote wellbeing and reduce  
7 incarceration are missing from the Preliminary  
8 Budget, including programs under the Mayor's Office  
9 of Criminal Justice.

10 We are calling on the City Council to make sure  
11 the Adopted Budget aligns with the city's legal and  
12 moral obligation to close Rikers by increasing  
13 funding for diversion and reentry programs. \$1.3  
14 million to restore cuts to ATI, \$3.3 million to  
15 restore cuts to reentry services, \$10 million in  
16 additional funds for ATI programs, and \$10 million in  
17 additional funds for reentry services as recommended  
18 by the ATI Reentry Coalition to bring these  
19 evidence-based models to scale. \$6.89 million to  
20 expand programs serving court-involved youth with  
21 mental health needs, \$20.3 million to establish at  
least 150 units of low-barrier housing for people  
with court involvement and mental health diagnosis.  
MOCJ should also publish an analysis of the full need

1  
2 for transitional reentry housing and conduct a data  
3 match to generate an updated eligibility for justice  
4 impacted supportive housing which is JISH, a  
5 permanent reentry housing program. In recent years,  
6 the City Council fought hard for these investments in  
7 evidence-based programs that strengthen communities,  
8 improve public safety and keep people out of Rikers  
9 Island. These programs are not only effective,  
10 they're also popular. A recent survey which is  
11 included in my statement of crime victims of the New  
12 York City showed that three or four preferred  
13 alternatives to incarceration and mental health  
14 treatment instead of jail.

15 We thank you for your advocacy and we need to do  
16 more. The truth is these investments still pail in  
17 comparison to the cost of Rikers Island- and just in  
18 closing- which is set to operate at a cost of \$2.99  
19 billion in fiscal 27. Meanwhile hundreds of people  
20 are still on waiting lists for transitional housing.  
21 Without that stability too many people cycle back  
into Rikers. Alternatives to incarceration can serve  
50 people on average for the same cost of detaining  
one person per year on Rikers. Yes, and in closing,  
the plan to close Rikers Island approved by this

1  
2 Council in 2019 marked the commitment to take a more  
3 effective approach to public safety. That shift  
4 requires spending our money differently, and this is  
5 the year to finally do it. Included with this  
6 testimony is a full budget analysis that outlines the  
7 amendments needed to align the fiscal year 27 budget  
8 with closing Rikers Island. Thank you very much, and  
9 I know I'm over time. Thank you.

8 ERICA FORD: Good afternoon. My name is Erica  
9 Ford. Thank you for having us, Councilman Feliz,  
10 Feliz. If a shooting never happens, it doesn't show  
11 up in police data, but it shows up and save lives,  
12 stabilize families, and intact communities. This is  
13 the work that we do every single day.

13 We are already first responders, but not  
14 recognized. That when a 911 call is made, it's too  
15 late. The members of the New York City Crisis  
16 Management System step up without a bullet-proof  
17 vest, without working a 24-hour shift, and interrupt  
18 and mediate conflicts. We mediated over 6,700  
19 situations last year, over 7,200 de-escalations.  
20 We've engaged in over 54,000 hours of canvassing  
21 hours engaging community, and we want to be  
22 recognized as the people who are co-producing public

1 safety in New York City. When you see the record  
2 numbers, it is the members of the New York City  
3 Crisis Management System who went out and stopped the  
4 violence, the gun from being picked up and used as a  
5 method of someone's trauma. Asking for less than 10  
6 percent of the police budget is only \$500 million. It  
7 is used in a way to increase staffing, to increase  
8 hours, to set up a training academy that can now  
9 professionalize a field of people as the brother just  
10 talked about, reentry, that these brothers and  
11 sisters coming home from incarceration where we know  
12 is an intentional business for families and  
13 communities upstate live off of the incarceration of  
14 our children.

15 And so in order for their communities to exist,  
16 they have to arrest our children and our husbands and  
17 our wives and our families downstate. And so we  
18 don't want to be the economy of upstate.

19 We want to invest in our work in the New York  
20 City Crisis Management System so we can decrease the  
21 number of our family that's getting killed and/or  
going into the prison industrial complex. We want to  
the business of upstate.

1  
2 HAILEY NOLASCO: Good afternoon, Chair Feliz and  
3 members of the committee. My name is Hailey Nolasco,  
4 Senior Director of Government Relations at the Center  
5 for Justice Innovation. Thank you for the  
6 opportunity to testify. Strategic investments in  
7 community-based solutions make New Yorkers safer.  
8 While the city faces significant fiscal challenges,  
9 we must continue to meet the evolving needs of our  
10 communities by investing in approaches that are  
11 innovative, holistic, and rooted in meeting people  
12 where they're at. Community-based programs provide  
13 critical resources, opportunities and pathways to  
14 safety and alternatives to incarceration.

15 We respectfully request both programmatic and  
16 capital support to scale our Community Justice  
17 Centers. As noted by our District Attorney partners,  
18 these centers connect New Yorkers at risk of violence  
19 and system involvement. With tailored supports  
20 through youth investment, workforce initiatives,  
21 gender-based violence trainings and services we  
address root causes and create meaningful  
opportunities for young people and their families.

Also, additionally, the New York City Crisis  
Management System which includes the center's very

1  
2 own Save our Streets program has played a key and  
3 necessary role in reducing gun violence across our  
4 city. We urge the Council to strengthen the system  
5 through continued investments in infrastructure,  
6 expanded coverage and services in the communities  
7 most impacted by violence currently without a  
8 footprint. New York City is becoming safer, and that  
9 progress is not by accident. This work has  
10 contributed to the historic declines in violence that  
11 we're experiencing, and this budget is an opportunity  
12 to build on that progress. We are grateful for the  
13 Council's partnership and we thank you for your time.  
14 Additional details have been submitted in our written  
15 testimony. Thank you.

16 MESSIAH RAMKISSOON: Good evening, Chair Feliz  
17 and Council Member Wong, all present. My name is  
18 Messiah Ramkissoon and I serve as the Deputy  
19 Executive Director of Youth Justice Network, formerly  
20 known as Friends of Island Academy. Our citywide  
21 youth advocacy model serves as the bridge between  
young people transitioning from incarceration to  
marginalized communities within the five boroughs,  
supporting healthier outcomes and sustainable  
pathways. Our work prioritizes proximity and

1 tangibility as two critical components to eradicate  
2 recidivism.

3 In 2016, we created a system of aftercare called  
4 the Youth Reentry Network which was catalyzed by our  
5 youth advocacy model. This network ensured that  
6 every young person entering the doors of new  
7 admissions within Rikers was attached to a youth  
8 advocate from the first day of incarceration to the  
9 day of release. Inclusive of, but not limited to  
10 outcomes around housing and employment, education and  
11 mental health, the youth plans created with young  
12 people and their advocates during detention were  
13 actualized immediately upon discharge.

14 We have learned that young people are more  
15 responsive to a model built on trust rather than one  
16 built on mandate. However, due to the pandemic our  
17 budgets were cut and we were forced to lay off 70  
18 percent of our staff. Jails shut their doors to all  
19 service providers.

20 This was the worst possible time for youth coming  
21 from inequitable conditions to be disconnected from  
the urgent support systems that ensured their  
wellness and success. This resulted in our  
innovation and creation of shifting gears, a mobile

1 resource bus which drives into a different borough  
2 each day of the week, delivering our resources  
3 directly to the doorstep of the neighborhoods that  
4 our youth come home to, our buses equipped with an  
5 outreach team of credible messengers and also an army  
6 of advocates tied to each borough. We have seen  
7 impactful engagement with over 65 percent enrollments  
8 for services and supports for youth and young adults  
9 who meet us on the block. Attached to my testimony  
10 is a shifting gears three-month schedule. Please  
11 review it. We would love to meet you on the block.  
Please review- if I may have one more second?

12 We envision a city where each of the respective  
13 boroughs you represent has its own dedicated shifting  
14 gears mobile resource bus and assigned team of  
15 advocates. We hope that you honor these words as an  
16 urgent call to action for greater intentionality and  
17 investment into the change that's needed for youth  
18 who are often forgotten and held accountable for  
19 conditions they did not create but rather inherited  
20 from birth. Thank you for your time and attention,  
21 and I would be happy to answer any of your questions  
today.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so much  
3 for your testimony today. Appreciate the work that  
4 you're doing and your testimony. Next, we're going  
5 to hear from Safina Tani [sp?] from the Asian  
6 American Federation, Yvonne Williams [sp?], and  
7 Richard Flores from BRC. Sorry?

8 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible]

9 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Are you all together? Okay,  
10 so yeah, that's fine. Alright, so we're going to add  
11 another chair, so I'll just call everyone who's  
12 remaining in-person. Sophia Tani [sp?], Yvonne  
13 Williams, Richard Flores, Omar Hardy [sp?], Betty  
14 Davis, Evangeline Byars, and Ruth Lowencran [sp?].

15 EVANGELINE BYARS: Good evening. My name is  
16 Evangeline Byars. I'm with the People's Coalition to  
17 Stop Deed Theft. We're here to give testimony  
18 regarding the need for funding for the DA's new  
19 Office of Deed Theft Unit at the Brooklyn DA's  
20 office.

21 As I was listening to the testimony earlier  
today, it is- the Queens DA was giving her testimony  
about how many cases that she prosecuted. I think  
that there needs to be some updated statistics of how  
many people are actually affected by deed theft in

1  
2 New York City. In Central Brooklyn, the old data  
3 says 3,500. However, it is way, way more than that.  
4 We are the rapid response first responders who  
5 respond when someone's home has been taken from them.  
6 There are considerable issues when it comes to  
7 investigations at the Brooklyn DA's office.

8 So, this is a taskforce that is extremely  
9 necessary and a work that has been overlooked for a  
10 very, very long time. So, we're hoping that the  
11 funding is made available. They need attorneys.  
12 They need paralegals to fully staff the office so  
13 that the work can be done. We're currently waiting.  
14 We met with them. This plan started out in December.  
15 We're now in March and people are being evicted from  
16 their homes who are owners all because of the failure  
17 to investigate and stop that process.

18 And so until this is made a priority, more and  
19 more homeowners will be evicted. As a matter of  
20 fact, there was supposed to be more people here, but  
21 we've been in court all day and rapid responding to  
unlawful evictions happening across the city.  
Another thing that is an issue with this is that when  
it comes to reporting, the Police Department does not  
take police reports for deed theft, right?

1  
2 And I note that today in Police Commissioner  
3 Tisch's presentation. She did- she said nothing  
4 about this crisis that is happening across New York  
5 City. Thank you.

6 YVONNE WILLIAMS: Good evening. My name is  
7 Yvonne Williams. I'm a Brooklyn resident and small  
8 business owner directly impacted by complex real  
9 estate and financial fraud. I am here in support of  
10 fully funding a specialized District Attorney  
11 taskforce focused on deed fraud, mortgage fraud,  
12 title fraud, and related financial crime. What is  
13 commonly described as deed theft today often involves  
14 far more complex schemes, layered corporate entities,  
15 fraudulent endorsement [sic], manipulated mortgage  
16 instruments, falsified documents, and procedural  
17 exploitation within foreclosure systems.

18 There are sophisticated financial crimes tied to  
19 property ownership. I am personally a victim of  
20 repeated document fraud connected to real estate  
21 transactions. I have spent years gathering  
documentation, identifying discrepancies and  
attempting to bring evidence forward. But private  
citizens do not have subpoena power. We do not have

1 forensic document analysts. We do not have  
2 investigators.

3 And I'm not the only one. Many victims remain  
4 silent because the process is overwhelming.  
5 Meanwhile, statutes of limitation continue to run.  
6 When enforcement capacity does not match the  
7 complexity of the crime, perpetrators become bolder  
8 and more intricate in their methods.

9 This is not simply about passing laws, it is  
10 about funding the people who can enforce them.  
11 Brooklyn needs dedicated financial crime prosecutors,  
12 experienced investigators, forensic document, and  
13 accounting expertise, paralegal and analytical  
14 support, cross-agency coordination. If we want  
15 justice, funding must match the sophistication of the  
16 crime. No New Yorker should be denied justice  
17 because enforcement lacks funding. And I would just  
18 like to say ending, hello, that the problem that  
19 we're facing here is that we live in the financial  
20 capital of the world, as you are aware, and the  
21 criminals here are very sophisticated, and the  
District Attorneys need help. So, we are supporting  
them, supporting funding for that office because we  
need justice in Brooklyn. Thank you.

1  
2           OMAR HARDY: Greetings to the Chairperson and  
3 members of the committee. My name is Chief Minister  
4 Omar Hardy, a living flesh natural human being, and I  
5 stand before you as the son of Clarence Junior XX  
6 Hardy Chabez [sp?] and an heir apparent of Judge  
7 Jonnell [sp?] Phillips, Jr. My family's legacy is  
8 etched into the brick and mortar of Brooklyn through  
9 the Slave Theater and the Black Lady [sp?] Theater.  
10 These were not just buildings, they were the beating  
11 hearts of our communities' culture and autonomy.

12           Today, those legacies are under siege by a  
13 sophisticated web of white collar crime. I'm here to  
14 testify that the District Attorney's office required  
15 dedicated, robust funding to dismantle the rico-level  
16 racketeering and patterns of crime that define deed  
17 theft in our borough. The reality of the crisis- for  
18 too long we have seen a disturbing trend where police  
19 resources are utilized to interfere with evictions or  
20 protect those operating under fraudulent deeds.

21           While the actual paper terrorists goes  
unpunished. I am currently facing the absurdity of  
an unlawful arrest simply for protecting my own  
property. This is a gross misallocation of the  
public funds. The city is spending money to

1  
2 prosecute victims while the racketeers remain free to  
3 steal the next property- why the DA needs this  
4 funding. Deed theft is not a civil matter. It is a  
5 predatory organized crime. We need more than just a  
6 taskforce. We need specialized prosecutors.

7 Investigating these complex paper trails requires a  
8 dedicated team that won't be pulled away by street  
9 level cases. Victim support services to help  
10 families like mine navigate the trauma and legal  
11 labyrinth of regaining what was stolen.

12 Accountability- the DA has already expressed a  
13 commitment to working with our special groups, our  
14 organization, the People's Coalition to Stop Deed  
15 Theft. However, a commitment without a budget is  
16 just a promise. The personal cause- the lack of  
17 aggressive prosecution has upended my life and the  
18 lives of those I represent in Assembly District 56.  
19 When a system fails to prosecute deed theft, it  
20 signals to organized criminals that Brooklyn is open  
21 for business.

Justice for the legacies of John Phillips and my  
father requires more than words. It requires the  
financial infrastructure to investigate, indict, and

1  
2 incarcerate those who use pens and fraudulent stamps  
3 to displace our people.

4 I urge this committee to fully fund the DA's  
5 efforts specifically targeted at white collar  
6 racketeering and deed theft. Let us stop  
7 criminalizing the owners and start prosecuting the  
8 thieves. Thank you.

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Good evening. I want to thank you  
10 for the opportunity to present this presentation on  
11 behalf of one of our members by the name of Florence  
12 Smith. She is Litchmore [sp?] Smith, and she's the  
13 owner of a property at 170 Patchin [sp?] Avenue.

14 The whole block has been targeted and the block  
15 next to it has been targeted, and the block on the  
16 other side has been targeted by predatory LLCs and  
17 corporations in this city, and I'm sure you're aware  
18 that justice delayed is justice denied. I do not  
19 have to tell you what that means. But I'm here to  
20 ask you to reference a textbook. As a retired  
21 educator, Oswald, I want you to do your homework. And  
it's called the Black Tax by Alfred Call [sp?]. He  
is a professor from the University of Virginia, and  
what he has done is he has taken the history from  
when the first African was liberated from shadow

1  
2 slavery and got actually 40 acres and a mule up until  
3 today, the most recent statistics, and what he has  
4 shown is a pattern of depriving people of African  
5 descent in this country of intergenerational wealth.

6 Now, for a country that claims to be capitalist,  
7 that's a big enough crime in itself, but what the  
8 gentleman to my right has said is that there is a  
9 pattern here of law-breaking. I don't understand how  
10 bureaucracy can be at the mercy of predators to the  
11 extent that it has happened in Brooklyn. When I  
12 started challenging the unfair summonses and  
13 citations that Black homeowners were getting in  
14 Brooklyn, a newspaper responded and documented my  
15 accusations.

16 Senator Myrie [sp?] then called a townhall  
17 meeting, and he documented that over 200,000 Black  
18 people have been ethnically cleansed out of Brooklyn  
19 in the last 20 years, and part of that is the loss of  
20 homeownership through predatory corporate entities,  
21 and that is why we are here today. And we know you  
can do something about it, because it is the duty of  
government to institute justice. Thank you.

RUTH LOWENKRON: Good evening. My name is Ruth  
Lowenkron. I'm with the Disability Justice Program

1  
2 at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and I'm  
3 here to talk about the critical issues of the city's  
4 failure to appropriately respond to mental health  
5 crises. The statistics you may know, but I'm going  
6 to repeat them, and I would really even like to hold  
up a sign about them.

7 In the last 10 years alone, we have seen the  
8 police of New York City kill 24 individuals who are  
9 experiencing mental health crises. They or their  
10 loved ones called 911. The only way to get  
11 assistance for mental health crises is for the police  
12 to show up, and you're lucky if you get away with  
13 your life. 24 individuals who we know about, and it  
14 won't surprise to know that the vast majority of them  
are either Black individuals or other people of  
color, almost 90 percent of them.

15 So, that's the tip of the iceberg. Individuals  
16 are also being severely injured. Individuals are  
17 being made- are arrested and being brought into the  
18 criminal legal system. Individuals are being brought  
19 into psychiatric hospitals against their will. This  
20 is not the way to deal with mental health crises.  
Other cities know about this. When is New York City  
going to catch up with this.

1  
2 Well, I'm optimistic, because we know the mayor  
3 has been talking about this. We know that the City  
4 Council has been talking about this. You have a bill  
5 with over 28 sponsors, Int. 1524 that talks about  
6 making sure that we have a system in place that  
7 provides non-police response to a health crisis, a  
8 mental health crisis. This is the answer, and it's  
9 important to know that it's also the answer from the  
10 perspective of the police. You will not hear the  
11 average police person on the beat telling it to you,  
12 but you will hear those in the retired status and  
13 whole organization, Law Enforcement Action  
14 Partnership. You have academics who are former police  
15 telling you this is not a job for the police.

16 So, what we ask you to do is to ensure that money  
17 is allocated in the budget for a non-police response.  
18 And I'll just say that we understand there may be  
19 instances, but they are the rarest of instances when  
20 police will be needed. But other than those, the  
21 vast majority, no police. Let's save lives.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thanks for allowing me to testify  
today, Chair Feliz. Before I make testimony, I'd  
like to make one very clear statement here.  
alternatives to incarceration, I'd like to testify

1  
2 that level three felony rapists, murderers, and  
3 thieves should not be free without bail working as  
4 CTs and volunteers for the Bowery Residents  
5 Committee.

6 This is a question that you asked me last time  
7 when I was here on the 10th of what was my concerns  
8 at the facility, and this is one of my concerns.  
9 Again, before I make testimony, I'd like to remind  
10 the City Council that the cost of the United States  
11 of America for the current war in Iran is \$11.3  
12 billion to \$16.5 billion which will rise to \$1  
13 billion per day.

14 With regard to how the NYPD, its affiliates,  
15 District Attorneys- we heard from today the NYPD  
16 Narcotics Department, the CCRB, the Mayor's Office of  
17 Criminal Justice handling various types of crime,  
18 including corruption, fraud, petty larceny, grand  
19 larceny, every aspect of how each municipal agency  
20 can actually serve the purpose in accordance to the  
21 United States Constitution.

My question to the committee is why despite the  
budget's dedication to allocate funding and resources  
failing so many American citizens, immigrants,  
migrants, and even illegal persons and their

1 families- very certain to me is that poor and even  
2 illegal de-legislation and legislation of  
3 constitutional law is the root of what is the result  
4 of municipal corruption. This is the reason for the  
5 myriad recidivist crimes of every type including the  
6 mental health crisis, physical health crisis, health  
7 crisis in general has affected every single American  
8 life regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, and  
9 nationality.

10 This being the current reality as a result of how  
11 bad government and legislation and rule of law  
12 actually affects individuals lives. How does this  
13 Council expect that any budget will actually be used  
14 to affect positively their initiatives and goals,  
15 meaning any agency.

16 Lastly, in addition, how our agricultural  
17 business, health, educational and social systems have  
18 been impacted upon by artificial intelligence has  
19 resulted in what is thought of as being rational,  
20 then is projected in the mind as rational via the  
21 post-modern era that we live in, and I find that a  
most disturbing reality. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you. Thank you so much  
for your testimony and for joining us today. So,

1  
2 with that said, I think we've concluded our in-person  
3 testimony. We'll now turn to virtual panelists. So,  
4 this panel is excused. Thank you again for joining  
5 us. We'll now turn to virtual panelists. For  
6 virtual panelists, once your name is called, a member  
7 of our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms  
8 will set the timer and give you the go-ahead to  
9 begin.

10 Please wait for the Sergeant to announce that you  
11 may begin before delivering your testimony. I'll now  
12 call out the first virtual panelist. Actually, I'll  
13 read out the three that we have signed up, and then  
14 we'll call the first one. Dr. Towana Gulfport [sp?],  
15 Melody- Towana Gilford [sp?], Melody Jimenez, and  
16 then Alex Stein. So, we'll start with Dr. Towana  
17 Gilford [sp?].

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

19 TAWANNA GILFORD: Hello, good evening. I would  
20 like to thank the Committee Chair, the Public Safety  
21 Committee, members of the respective staff, the  
legislative team, the Commissioner Tisch, the NYPD  
officers, and also to other stakeholders in the realm  
of public safety.

1  
2 I am Dr. Tawanna Gilford, a New York State  
3 Licensed Psychologist and lifelong member of the  
4 Harlem community. I am the Chair of the Reimagining  
5 Policing Coalition, the Co-founder of the Stop False  
6 Police Reporting initiative, and most of all, I am a  
7 health care practitioner for our most vulnerable New  
8 Yorkers, those experiencing mental health challenges  
9 and might possibly be in crisis.

10 In my previous role as a direct care provider and  
11 also as a concerned community member, I have assisted  
12 individuals and families with making calls to B-HEARD  
13 initiative for crisis response. On many of these  
14 occasions I have witnessed breakdowns in  
15 communication and also experienced the failures in  
16 getting individuals the holistic and person-centered  
17 care that was needed to foster trust and a higher  
18 level of care. I left those experiences feeling  
19 regretful of having called for help, because what  
20 ended up happening was that additional harm was  
21 caused in those situations. As opposed to remaining  
critical and apathetic, I have turned my pain into  
purpose and I continue to advocate for a more humane  
response to those experiencing a mental health  
crisis.

1  
2 With that said, I stand before you today to  
3 propose three ideas to improving the mental health  
4 response. First, I would like for city government to  
5 increase funding for the B-HEARD program and make it  
6 a formal part of the NYPD's response protocol,  
7 officially recognizing it as a collaboration with New  
8 York City Health + Hospitals.

9 Secondly, the B-HEARD program should fall under  
10 the purview of a licensed psychologist working  
11 collaboratively with a psychiatrist, a licensed  
12 clinical social worker, and a member of the NYPD  
13 crisis management team.

14 Lastly, I would like to address an ongoing debate  
15 as to whether NYPD-

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank you. Your  
17 time expired.

18 TAWANNA GILFORD: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much for your  
20 testimony. Next we'll hear from Melody Jimenez.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Melody, are you still there?

MELODY JIMENEZ: Yes, I am. I apologize for  
that.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you.

1  
2           MELODY JIMENEZ: Thank you for the opportunity,  
3 giving me the opportunity of speaking. My name is  
4 Melody Jimenez, the Founder of No Voice Unheard.  
5 Through No Voice Unheard we advocate for families  
6 impacted by gun, gang and street violence. We  
7 provide support resources and a platform for mothers  
8 and fathers who are grieving, seeking justice and  
9 trying to rebuild after an unimaginable loss.

10           We work directly in communities connecting  
11 families to services, amplifying their voices and  
12 ensuring that they're navigating- not navigating  
13 through these systems alone. I stand before you as  
14 someone who has seen the pain up close, parents  
15 grieving their children, families searching for an  
16 answer and communities struggling to feel safe. This  
17 is why funding matters.

18           When we talk about public safety, safety and  
19 budgets, we are talking about- not talking about the  
20 numbers, but talking about whether our systems have  
21 the ability to respond in moments of crisis. The New  
York City Police Department, our District Attorney's  
office, and the Special Narcotics Prosecutors can be  
funded to help investigate crimes, remove dangerous

1  
2 activities from our streets and deliver justice to  
3 families who are counting on them.

4 When these departments lack resources, cases are  
5 delayed, investigations suffer, and communities are  
6 left without the protection they deserve. Our  
7 families fill that gap. I am asking this Council to  
8 prioritize funding that reflects the reality of  
9 communities that they face every day. Families  
10 across these cities rely on these departments at the  
11 most difficult moments, and through organizations  
12 like No Voice Unheard, we see firsthand what happens  
13 to those that fall short within the system. This is  
14 not about protecting- this is about protecting lives.  
15 It's about delivering justice, and this is about  
16 building a safer future for all of us.

17 I would like to thank you guys for your time and  
18 also ask that you guys consider bringing the Gun  
19 Violence Bereavement Bill back to the City Council.  
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: Thank you so much. Next,  
we'll hear from Alex Stein.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: He might have left us.

1  
2 UNIDENTIFIED: Good afternoon everyone. I would  
3 like to thank you for the opportunity-

4 CHAIRPERSON FELIZ: [interposing] Alright, so it  
5 seems like Alex Stein is not on the Zoom signed up. I  
6 guess he left. So we've now heard from everyone who  
7 has signed up to testify. If we missed anyone who  
8 would like to testify in-person, please visit the  
9 Sergeant's table and complete a witness slip now. If  
10 we inadvertently missed anyone who would like to  
11 testify virtually, please use the raise hand function  
12 in Zoom and a member of our staff will call you in  
13 the order of hands raised.

14 I'll give everybody five seconds to raise your  
15 hands if you haven't done so and are on. Alright.  
16 I'll now read the names of those who registered to  
17 testify but have not yet filled out a slip, a witness  
18 slip or appear via Zoom: Tabitha Sheppard, Safina  
19 Tanni [sp?], and Alex Stein via Zoom.

20 Alright, seeing no one else, I would like to note  
21 again that written testimony which will be reviewed  
in full by committee staff may be submitted to the  
record up to 72 hours after the close of this hearing  
by emailing it to [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

I'd like to just thank everyone who joined us in this hearing, including everyone who testified, also all the Council Members who have joined, and especially Council Member Wong for being here the entire hearing. Thank you. This Public Safety hearing is hereby adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date May 29, 2026